

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE SCOTTISH RUGBY CLUB RUGBY BOARD
HELD AT 5PM ON WEDNESDAY 19 APRIL 2023
AT BT MURRAYFIELD AND BY MICROSOFT TEAMS**

Present:

Keith Wallace	(KW)	Vice-President
Murdo Gillanders	(MG)	Edinburgh Regional Representative
Jim O'Neill	(JON)	Glasgow South Regional Representative (online)
Kevin Quinn	(KQ)	Premiership Representative
Bob Richmond	(BR)	North Regional Representative
Neil Sutherland	(NS)	National 2 Representative
Hazel Swankie	(HS)	Midlands Representative
David Jamieson	(DJ)	Glasgow North Regional Representative
Gib McMillan	(GM)	Schools Representative
Ian Carse	(IC)	National 3 Representative
Mhairi Hay	(MH)	Referees Representative (online)
Mike Bruce	(MB)	Women & Girls Representative (online)
Gerry Tosh	(GT)	National 1 Representative (online)
Gavin Scott	(GS)	Director of Rugby Development

Apologies:

Alistair Forsyth	(AF)	Borders Regional Representative
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In Attendance:

Colin Rigby	(CR)	President
[REDACTED]	(XX)	Senior Solicitor
[REDACTED]	(XX)	Head of Rugby Development Operations
[REDACTED]	(XX)	Head of Regional Development
[REDACTED]	(XX)	Head of Game Development
[REDACTED]	(XX)	Competitions and Compliance Manager (online)
[REDACTED]	(XX)	Business Operations and Support Manger
Dougie Belmore	(DB)	Championship Committee Convenor (online)

1. Introduction ACTION

The Vice-President noted that a quorum was present and opened the Meeting.

Apologies noted from the Borders Regional Representative.

2. Minutes

Minutes of the CRB Meeting of 15 March 2022 had been approved electronically, prior to Meeting.

3. Actions/Matters Arising

- 3.1** *The Director of Rugby Development noted that High Performance would present to the CRB on their plans for the review. This would be arranged for a future CRB Meeting.*
– The Senior Solicitor updated the Members that there were ongoing discussions in relation to the review that was going to be conducted. It was noted and the fora,

including the Premiership, would be consulted in the process. High Performance representatives would attend a CRB meeting in due course. Action is ongoing.

The Vice-President would update the Union Board on the CRB's discussion in relation to Super6 at its next Meeting – Complete.

Further work was needed to finalise the wording in relation to the laws, the Match Official framework and the documentation promoting the changes. – Complete.

The running of a small trial of the recommended tackle height during PDH (Player Development Hubs) to obtain more feedback from players, coaches, parents and spectators – Ongoing.

Extension of stage one of the consultation period (Regional League Review) and a communication should be included in Club Comms – Ongoing.

The proposed changes to the NCRs should be communicated to the clubs. The Competitions and Compliance Manger advised that she would work with the Rugby Development Communications Manager to agree a launch date – Ongoing.

4. Chair's Remarks

The Vice-President noted that the CRB Meeting of 15 March had covered a substantial amount of business and this Meeting would provide CRB Members with an interim update.

5. Competitions Committee

The Championship Committee Convenor noted that there had been high levels of requests from the clubs for dispensation/appeals and it was noted that this may be due to a lack of familiarity with the terms of the NCRs.

He also updated the Members that there had been healthy competition in the majority of leagues. It was noted that the Cup competitions may have suffered the prioritisation of teams playing in the Leagues over the Cup. It was suggested that this was something the Rugby Development Department considered going forward.

During discussion, the governance structure and the representation at Forum-level and Championship Committee of the new National Division 4 was discussed. The Vice-President advised that for representation, there would not be an individual National 4 Forum representative but instead a joint 3 and 4 representative.

The Competitions and Compliance Manager provided an update on the ongoing changes to the league structure that would be distributed later in the week. She noted that the format of the Cups would be discussed over the course of the summer.

It was asked what the plans were for the Clubs who were struggling to complete the season. The Championship Committee Convenor noted that where available, requests to reschedule fixtures had been accommodated, however there had been some instances where games could not be played and there had been knock-on effects, but these instances had followed the processes detailed in the Competition rules.

6. Super6 Review Timeline

It was noted the High Performance Department would engage with the CRB at the relevant point in their review process. **KW**

7. Governance

7.1 CRB Programme

The paper was taken as read and the CRB were content with the proposed programme of work.

The Vice-President suggested that the CRB Member reports be reviewed to reduce duplication, in addition to creating a streamlined reporting process for the next CRB meeting. **KW/AM**

7.2 Closer Working with Edinburgh/Glasgow

The Vice-President noted that there was a close link between the club and professional game which could be utilised more, particularly in relation to how the club game boosting ticket sales for the professional game. It was noted that a working group should be established to lead on this work. The following CRB Members agreed to join the working group:

- Premiership Representative
- Glasgow North Regional Representative
- Schools Representative

KW

7.3 Update on Elections Rules

The Senior Solicitor updated the CRB on the election rules, advising that the Council election rules were no longer valid under the new governance structure and there was a need for new election rules.

The Senior Solicitor suggested that it would be useful to firstly understand if the previous election rules were fit for purpose. She noted that previously by 30 April, nominations would have had to be made. She asked whether this date would still be appropriate. Previously, Members' terms would run from AGM to AGM. She noted that under the new governance structure the AGM would take place later in the year so questioned whether that was still an appropriate timescale.

The President suggested that a survey could gather feedback to influence the new election rules.

The Members discussed that the annual Community Game Conference could be the start of a CRB term, rather than the AGM.

The Senior Solicitor noted that she would directly contact the effected CRB Members regarding the process going forward once the rules had been put in place **AM**

8. Reporting

8.1 *Rugby Development Data and Business Report*

The Report taken as read.

The Director of Rugby Development noted that the reporting template for the transition rates had reduced for male players compared to the previous report, as the reporting age range for the transition had been reduced to report only U18 transitioning into U19.

He also noted that the report focused on Fixture Fulfilment. He advised that the Fixture Fulfilment figures needed to be reviewed and considered. This was a wider piece of work to understand the player base better and how to structure competitions to support them.

The Competitions and Compliance Manager noted that the numbers reflected on the report included all fixtures which were rescheduled, but did not necessarily reflect the issues some clubs were experiencing in relation to player numbers playing games.

During questions, the Head of Regional Development noted that the Development Officer review created three levels of DOs and that modern apprentices may come back in next strategy. He further noted that the Rugby Development Department did not currently have a modern apprentice scheme, however there are some club-led initiatives.

It was noted that fulfilment numbers could be further broken down into team sheet appearances.

In response to a question, the Director of Rugby Development noted the Rugby Development Department would look into the average number of players needed to have a team and the amount needed to create a second XV. **GS**

It was suggested that year on year comparisons and trends could be added to the report. The Director of Rugby Development noted that it was Rugby Development's intention for end-of-season (June) and mid-season (January) comparisons.

The National 3 Representative queried what mechanisms were in place for supporting a newly-emerging teams. The Head of Regional Development noted that the Regional Development Teams have supported clubs to create a Club Development Plan and to ensure there were clear fixtures in the diary. The need to publicly highlight the positive work of clubs doing so was emphasised.

8.2 *Rugby Development Regions and Game Development Report*

The Report taken as read.

8.3 *Working Groups*

8.3.1 *Regions and Reserves*

The Competitions and Compliance Manager noted that the paper which was endorsed by the CRB at the Meeting of 14 March was to be distributed to clubs in Club Comms with a competitions schedule being finalised which would be shared in June.

She further updated the Members that the Rugby Development department's Competitions Team looked into what the reserve leagues would look like and plan to create a 'quick guide' on how to play the game.

The National 2 Representative queried if there were any plans for reserve teams to be sanctioned if they called off games on a Friday. The Competitions and Compliance Manager noted that there was a plan to create a working group and agree some protocols to put into place (of encouragement of good practice and communication between clubs), as opposed to adding more rules. **VC**

The Glasgow North Regional Representative suggested that the competition rules do not explicitly state that there is some bending of the rules. The Referees Representative added that the time which a player can play in a game could also be looked into.

8.3.2 Districts

The Competitions and Compliance Manager updated the Members that the Inter-District finals day would be held in GHA. She then proceeded to talk through the fixtures and locations for the Championship. She noted that the coaching teams and training squads had been announced and once tickets were available to purchase, it would be relayed through Club Comms.

8.3.3 Budget

The Report was taken as read and the CRB were satisfied with its content.

9. Community Game Conference

9.1 Timeline (including questionnaire)

The Report was taken as read.

The Head of Game Development provided an update on the upcoming Community Game Conference. Registration was now live, the programme was launched and the guest speakers were still to be confirmed.

He also noted that he will contact the CRB Community Game Conference working group for comments and input. **NG**

He further provided an update on a 'have your say' survey opportunity for Rugby Development's current strategy, which was planned to be sent to clubs at the end of April, closing in mid-May. He noted that the aim of the survey was to briefly review the impact of the current strategy and input into the future of the next Rugby Development strategy.

9.2 Strategy Review Timeline

The Report taken as read and the CRB were satisfied with the proposed timeline.

9.3 Social Impact

The Director of Rugby Development referred to the social impact case studies in sport (IRFU and swimming in England) reports which were taken as read. He noted that the IRFU were the only major rugby Union who had conducted a social impact case study and advised that their feedback was that they found it useful to engage with sponsors and government to show the impact on volunteers and as a community.

During the discussion on whether the Rugby Development Department should do an SROI project, the Premiership Representative noted that there may be challenges with targeting the impact in rugby. The Director of Rugby Development noted that there were two companies shortlisted to potentially conduct the project and they would link figures with stories. He also suggested it was a good way to promote what we do and our impact and could become a more frequent project, but there will be a need for involvement and buy-in from clubs.

The Vice-President noted that a large amount of money and investment goes into clubs and suggested that it should be relatively easy to capture this, in addition to adding the health and other benefits of rugby.

The Director of Rugby Development noted the next steps in the process would be initiating conversations with the two companies who can facilitate the project to potentially secure it in place for the Community Club Conference in June, to show to club members and get buy in. The Rugby Development Department will provide an update before the next CRB meeting. **GS**

The National 3 Representative suggested creating a creche in the club to improve participation. The Vice-President noted that case studies could also highlight this.

10. Welfare Action Plan

The Report was taken as read.

The Head of Game Development noted that the report was not a document which had existed in the community game previously. He noted that it sets out 8 actions to ensure the Rugby Development department are proactive in the player welfare space and it would evolve as research is published. The document would have a soft launch and KPIs assigned next it for the next season. He noted that the report would be sent to **sportscotland** and other Unions for feedback.

The Vice-President suggested that the Rugby Development Welfare Manager could be invited to the next CRB meeting. **HSin**

11. Safeguarding

The Director of Rugby Development noted that Safeguarding is a standing item on all Forums, but it is not always discussed. He discussed that all youth coaches have a PVG but there should be more transparency with the CRB of safeguarding cases. The Head of Game Development added that annually, coaches need to complete a safeguarding module.

He noted that Rugby Development's Game Development team and Scottish Rugby's Safeguarding team were working to create a course which will be delivered by Safeguarding Tutors to each region (3 courses per region). The Director of Rugby Development suggested that the CRB should make their clubs aware of the importance of these courses.

The Director of Rugby Development noted that the Whyte Review, which looked into British Gymnastics, may create some changes for Rugby Development's safeguarding procedures.

The Schools Representative suggested that coaches should also be aware of secondary safeguarding issues, rather than just direct cases with the club. The Glasgow South Regional Representative welcomed this suggestion and offered his expertise if needed. He also noted that anyone can report concerns regarding the welfare of a child, not just the CPO.

The Premiership Representative noted that there was a communication regarding the expectation of clubs that safeguarding should feature as a standing item and suggested that we could remind clubs that this should be happening.

12. AOB

12.1 *Rugby Radio for Scotland – Proposal*

The Director of Rugby Development noted that clubs need to review the opportunity and proposal to take a view on this proposal.

The most efficient channels of communication were discussed. The Director of Rugby Development noted that the Rugby Development department would look into the best ways to promote the game and via which channels, so the Department can understand the return on investment and the most appropriate channels to target different demographics. The Head of Game Development noted that a recent post by the Department on TikTok had a large number of views. The Vice-President suggested to gather a paper on these statistics.

NG

12.2 *AOB Discussed*

The Vice-President noted that it was interesting to see the variety of the "Tell Us" topics, and emphasised that the department should keep publicising Tell Us as a tool.

The Director of Rugby Development discussed the process of CRB papers being distributed to Members and CRB Members then creating their reports. There was agreement on continuing with the current process.

The Glasgow South Regional Representative noted his thanks to those involved in getting the Stewartry game at Silver Saturday into the main bowl.

The Glasgow South Regional Representative asked for an update on the Scottish Rugby Limited press release regarding the outcome of a report into a complaint. The President advised that a working party with representatives of both SRU and SRL boards had been established. The Glasgow South Regional Representative asked if a

FOR PUBLICATION

CRB Member would be included on the working party, it was noted that they would not but CRB input would be included as part

In response to questions, the Senior Solicitor advised that only the four members of the working group had seen the report and it would remain confidential. The intention of the working group was to conduct a wider investigation and the press release was approved by both SRU and SRL Boards.

No other AOB was raised and the Meeting was closed at 6.50PM.

13. Date of Next Meeting

28 June 2023