

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE SCOTTISH RUGBY CLUB RUGBY BOARD
HELD AT 5PM ON WEDNESDAY 28 JUNE 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 (online)
Neil Sutherland	(NS)	National 2 Representative
Hazel Swankie	(HS)	Midlands Representative
David Jamieson	(DJ)	Glasgow North Regional Representative
Ian Carse	(IC)	National 3 Representative (online)
Mike Bruce	(MB)	Women & Girls Representative (online)
Gerry Tosh	(GT)	National 1 Representative
Gavin Scott	(GS)	Director of Rugby Development
Alistair Forsyth	(AF)	Borders Regional Representative

Apologies:

Mhairi Hay	(MH)	Referees Representative
Gib McMillan	(GM)	Schools Representative

In Attendance:

Colin Rigby	(CR)	President
REDACTED	(XX)	Head of Legal and Governance
REDACTED	(XX)	Head of Rugby Development Operations
REDACTED	(XX)	Head of Regional Development
REDACTED	(XX)	Head of Game Development
REDACTED	(XX)	Head of Competitions and Compliance (online)
REDACTED	(XX)	Rugby Development Communications Manager
REDACTED	(XX)	Rugby Development Welfare Manager
REDACTED	(XX)	Solicitor
REDACTED	(XX)	Business Operations and Support Manger

1. Introduction**ACTION**

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

Welcome was given to the Rugby Development Welfare Manager and Rugby Development Communications Manager.

Apologies were noted from the Referees Representative and Schools Representative.

2. Minutes

2.1 Minutes of the CRB Meeting of 19 April 2023 were approved.

3. Actions

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

3.1.1 *SuperSeries Review* - The Vice-President updated the Members that he and the President met with the Scottish Rugby Super Series Representatives and confirmed that the review into the tournament was ongoing. He added that a questionnaire had been sent to Super Series clubs and another would be sent to Premiership and National 1 clubs. He noted that a paper had been created by Premiership clubs which would feed into the data gathering process. The action was noted as ongoing.

3.1.2 *CRB Paper Process* - **COMPLETE**

The Vice-President noted that a new process had been put in place for the current CRB Meeting, with the Rugby Development reports being received by Members a week earlier and CRB paper on the week of the Meeting. The questions from Members to CRB were also submitted in advance. CRB Members were in agreement of the new process.

3.1.3 *Domestic and Professional Club link* - The Vice-President noted that contact had been initiated with Edinburgh Rugby and Glasgow Warriors for closer working relationships. Further updates would be provided once the work began into how best to utilise the link between the club and professional games.

3.1.4 *Player Participation* – **COMPLETE.**

It was noted that a trial would pilot this summer for the average number of players needed to have a team.

3.1.5 *SROI* – **COMPLETE.**

The Director of Rugby Development updated the Members on who would be conducting the SROI for Rugby Development. The first meeting would take place on 19th July, with the intention for the majority of work to be completed by around December 2023, in conjunction with other club consultations. The aim is to have the SROI paper ready for the Community Game Conference in 2024.

3.1.6 *Rugby Development Social Media Reporting* – **COMPLETE.**

It was agreed that reporting to the CRB going forward would include an update on key social media updates that had taken place in the preceding quarter.

All other action points were either complete or covered off under agenda points at the Meeting.

4. **Business Reporting**

The Director of Rugby Development noted that at the CRB January and June meetings, updates would be provided on the budget and financials. Any interim reports would then focus on activity only.

The paper was taken as read and the following key points were highlighted:

- It was noted that 11 Tackle Height Roadshows had been delivered to date.

- An update was provided that 'Gainline' would replace 'Hive' next season. It was intended to link to SCRUMS and providing greater resources for the membership. It would also include news stories and videos from recent events such as the Community Game Conference. The Director of Rugby Development confirmed there would be a tutorial on the platform for CRB Members once the platform was ready.

4.1 Rugby Development Data and Business Report

The report was taken as read.

4.2 Regions & Game Development Report

The report was taken as read.

It was noted that an amendment was required to the Competitions report to reflect that Hawick Harlequins had won the East 3 league, not Edinburgh Northern.

4.3 Scrum School Update

The report was taken as read.

4.4 Transition & Retention Project Update

The report was taken as read.

4.5 Rugby Development Key Dates Calendar

The report was taken as read.

5. Community Game Conference De-Brief

The Vice-President thanked the Head of Game Development and colleagues for organising what has been an excellent Community Game Conference and acknowledged that those attendees had been a very welcome diverse mix of the membership.

The Head of Game Development provided an overview of the Community Game Conference and discussed feedback and areas of improvement for next conference, which included increasing the number of workshops for attendees.

Hosting the National Awards Night and conference on the same weekend next season was discussed. It was considered that there may be logistical and financial benefits to it being held at the same time. Members were encouraged to contact Rugby Development if they had any views or suggestions.

The Head of Game Development noted he would gather feedback and suggestions for the next Conference/awards night ahead of the next CRB Meeting. **NG**

6. Welfare Strategy

The Rugby Development Welfare Manager updated the Members that the Welfare Action Plan would be launched in mid-July and would be available on Gainline and SCRUMS.

The Head of Game Development noted the Welfare Action Plan was the first welfare plan for the community game which Scottish Rugby have produced. A concussion e-learning module would also be launched due to the developments in concussion guidelines. Changes in the standards of pitch side care would follow for minimum standards in first aid and the First Responder course.

The Glasgow South Regional Representative suggested that the Rugby Development Department could score clubs for having high welfare standards. It was discussed that these welfare standards are minimum standards and Clubs would be audited and supported to achieve them, this would be part of the Club Development Planning.

It was suggested that there should be a player health and welfare committee member on the Board of each club to focus on welfare. The Rugby Development Welfare Manager noted that it may be that there was a need for a 'Welfare Champion' within clubs who would be responsible to share best practice.

7. Rugby Development Budget

The Director of Rugby Development noted the budget report which had been presented to the CRB at its April Meeting had now been revised to take into account the rolling average of 15% of the Scottish Rugby turnover, which was ring-fenced for the Rugby Development Department's budget. This was an introduction of the recent governance review.

The Head of Rugby Development Operations noted that due to the ring fenced nature of this funded, the Rugby Development Department were able to more accurately foresee what the budget would be over the next 5 years. A trend graph of the budget from 2019/20 onward was presented to the Meeting. The following key points were noted in the discussion:

- This year's budget was **REDACTED – COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE**. It was highlighted that in any Rugby World Cup year, the revenue of the company would be less due to the lack of Autumn Tests.
- It was noted that there would be an increase in spend from the Growth and Participation fund.
- The Club Funding was of a similar level as that pre-Covid. The timing of the funding and relevant drawdowns was outlined to the CRB.
- Costs had been reduced in a number of areas.

The Vice-President added that due to changes in Scottish Rugby's budgetary processes, a more detailed breakdown of funding was now available, which was most welcome.

It was noted the potential need to account for inflation in the funding provided going forward. It was discussed the this was a potential issue as it could lead to each club being entitled to less.

The Director of Rugby Development noted that going forward the CRB Members would have an input into the budget discussions as well as influence in the upcoming formation of the 2024-2028 Rugby Development Strategy.

In response to a question, the Director of Rugby Development noted that the Rugby Development department had been provided with a discounted rate by Scottish Rugby Hospitality for use of facilities at Murrayfield. It was discussed that Rugby Development could consider venues out with Murrayfield for events if the other venues were more cost effective.

The Club Commission budget was discussed, the Director of Rugby Development noted the commission was based on ticket sales.

The Budget was then agreed.

8. Rugby Development Strategy Consultation Timelines

The Head of Game Development provided an update on the feedback gathered at the recent Community Game Conference. The following points were noted:

- He outlined the questionnaire which had been sent. It was noted 302 responses had been collected.
- It was proposed that the next stage in the Strategy timeline was Regional Roadshows in late September/early October, to delve into topics further and gather more input and solutions from Club representatives.
- It was noted that the Rugby Development Leadership Team would be meeting shortly to establish the Roadshow's structure and topics to be discussed.

The Head of Game Development discussed the Strategy Timeline. The Paper was taken as read. It was agreed that the CRB would review the strategy feedback provided to them at its August Meeting.

9. Activity Reporting

9.1 Response to CRB Questions

The Question and Answer paper was taken as read. No further comments from CRB Members were received and all were in agreement to submit questions and receive answers in advance of Meeting.

9.2 Key issues from CRB Member Quarterly Reports

The CRB Members discussed the key issues raised in their reports. The following points were noted:

- The Glasgow North Regional Representative noted that the West Society attended a Tackle Height Roadshow and noted their desire to organise a session.
- The Borders Regional Representative suggested considering the process of consultations and how best to engage clubs directly. In reference to a question on Age Grades, the Head of Game Development noted that 'Performance Pathway' was a theme from the survey and could be a topic of discussion for the next Rugby Development Strategy.
- The National 1 Representative noted that clubs continued to struggle to attract and retain volunteers. He suggested creating a volunteer forum for this. The Vice-President noted that 'Volunteering' was also a theme which could be discussed for the next Rugby Development Strategy.
- It was noted that the Borders Clubs have removed themselves from the East Reserve League and were trialling a new local Borders Reserve League. The Head of Competitions and Compliance noted that this would be monitored, potentially by the Championship Committee.
- The Glasgow South Regional Representative asked whether the Rugby Development Department were aware of any split in Tartan Touch Hubs who charge for games and those who offer it for free and if there was a difference in sign-ups as a result. The Head of Regional Development noted that the Rugby Development Department would be able to provide these numbers once the Tartan Touch season had completed.
- The National 3 Representative noted that due to the tourist season running to the end of October, it was affecting travel and hotel availability. He was working with the Head of Competitions and Compliance to discuss schedules with Loganair, to facilitate Club travel.

The National 3 Representative also noted his disappointment that the decision had been taken to not have a National 4 CRB Representative. He would continue to represent National 3 and would take on the role of National 4 Representative but would like to monitor and review this. The President offered to help the National 3 Representative to support National 4, and reiterated that the makeup of the CRB was set out in the articles of association, and as such would need a resolution at the AGM to change. As result it was agreed that any such change would sit better alongside outcomes of a likely future review of the makeup of CRB by SCOG.

- It was suggested that the recent success and growth of Orkney RFC could be added as 'Best Practice' review to Gainline.
- The North Regional Representative noted his thanks to the National 3 Representative for the work involved in creating guidance for travel to the islands.

The Premiership Representative noted that the reintroduction of the Inter-District Championship was a success and provided an opportunity for players of all levels. He noted his congratulations to Hawick on their success last season.

10. CRB Governance Approvals

10.1 CRB Election Rules (recommendation or otherwise to Union Board)

The Head of Legal And Governance noted that the CRB Election Rules were a matter reserved to the Union Board's Nominations Committee to approve.

She noted that she was working on collating the different election rules into one set which would be circulated to the CRB shortly for its reference.

AMc

The CRB were thanked for their feedback on the existing rules and were advised that this would be reflected in the updated set.

It was advised that this year would have a slightly different nomination date and would be agreed by each Fora. This year, it would be effective from the AGM date but going forward it would be from the Community Game Conference date.

It was suggested that the elections should take place as soon as possible after the approval of the election rules. It was confirmed that those Members who would be up for election would be in place until at least the AGM.

10.2 Club Name Change

It was noted by the Head of Legal and Governance that Hillhead Jordanhill would like their 3rd team to be known as HJRFC 3 XV . The CRB **APPROVED** this of name change.

It was noted that an associate club application had also been received by the Borders. The Vice-President and Head of Legal and Governance were due to meet the Head of Regulation to discuss the application and the CRB would be updated thereafter.

AM/KW

10.3 Schools and Youth NCRs

The Paper was taken as read and no further questions were asked.

10.4 Discipline panel

The Regulatory Department proposed the appointment of C Shryane to the Discipline Panel. It was noted that C Shryane was an experienced Citing Commissioner. The CRB **APPROVED** her appointment as a member of discipline panel.

11. CRB Work Planning

It was noted that once Board dates had been finalised, the CRB dates would be confirmed and distributed. The following CRB Meeting months and topics were noted:

- January – finalisation of strategy
- March – review budget
- June – review season past and look forward
- October – challenges of new season, reporting of strategy (around AGM time)

The Head of Legal and Governance would arrange for invites to be sent as soon as dates were confirmed. **AMc**

12. Diversity and Inclusion Update

The Rugby Development Communications Manager provided an update on resources for Inclusion and Diversity, including creating resources for LGBTQ for Pride Week.

13. Safeguarding Update

The Vice-President updated the Members on his recent meeting with the Child Wellbeing and Protection Manager who had established a Triage system for any safeguarding concerns which would be implemented in September. It was noted the system was still under consideration and further updates would be provided by the Safeguarding Department as the plans progressed.

The Safeguarding Department was also considering a Case Management Panel. The membership of which was to be established.

The following CRB members expressed interest in becoming more involved in Safeguarding matters, where appropriate:

- Glasgow South Regional Representative
- Premiership Representative
- National 2 Representative
- Women & Girls Representative

14. President Update

The President provided the CRB with an update on various matters. The following points were noted:

- CRB members would be invited to attend hospitality at one of the upcoming Summer Tests, in addition to receiving two complimentary tickets per home game.

The CRB members then had a discussion on ticket and hospitality allocations. The President noted the points they had raised and would seek clarity on their entitlements going forward and update the members at the proposed separate CRB Elected Members Meeting. **CR**

- The President noted that the President's Newsletter was to be distributed shortly. He added that he had had his first meeting with the Chair of Scottish Rugby Limited who he invited to the National Awards night (where he presented an award) and the Community Game Conference.
- He updated the members that the Interim Chair of the Union Board, Lorne Crerar, had extended his appointment. It was noted that Alison Milne and Maxine Manditsch had been appointed as the final two Custodian Directors, The Scottish Rugby Union Board was now at full complement.

- The President noted (with reference to the strategy and budget) that there were many projects on the horizon but due to it being a World Cup year, finances would be challenging in this financial year. He went on to explain the 4 year financial cycle to the CRB.

15. AOB

It was noted that the Inter-District Championship was a good competition with positive feedback from the players. It was raised that the challenge would be where it would fit into the season. It was noted that February/March was agreed upon to play the Inter-District Championship for season 23/24.

It was highlighted that in order to accommodate the Inter-District Championship, the finals would land on Melrose 7s date. It was proposed that for one year, this goes ahead but a paper should be created going forward to determine the scheduling.

It was discussed by the National 2 Representative if clubs can play on an international game day and bring clubs and supporters to Edinburgh. The Head of Competitions and Compliance advised that if there is a Scotland home game, a Club can arrange for the game to take place in Edinburgh, kicking off within two hours of an international game. She advised there was scope for clubs to request this and the Championship Committee would review the requests to facilitate games taking place. This would be revisited next season due to the Autumn Nations Series and the outcome of the Super Series review.

The Head of Competitions and Compliance noted that a final draft of the Adult NCRs would be published on the webpage for feedback. It was agreed that CRB would review the NCRs for agreement electronically as the timeline to approve these would fall before the next CRB Meeting.

The Edinburgh Representative raised concerns that he had in effect been publicly implicated by association in the press release relating to the Emerge Report. It was noted that a Joint Working Group of the SRL and SRU Boards had been established and would be updating the CRB in due course.

16. Chair Remarks

The Vice-President noted that the first season with the CRB in place was complete and reflected on the considerable amount of ground covered. He noted his thanks to all involved. He also noted his thanks to the Director of Rugby Development and his team for working closely with the CRB.

No other AOB was raised and the Meeting was closed at 8.10PM.

17. Date of Next Meeting

23 August 2023