

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE SCOTTISH RUGBY CLUB RUGBY BOARD  
HELD AT 5PM ON 12 JUNE 2024  
MONCREIFF SUITE, SCOTTISH GAS MURRAYFIELD**

**Present:**

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

**Apologies:**

Ian Carse	(IC)	National 3 Representative
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**In Attendance:**

Colin Rigby	(CR)	President
Chris Hildrey	(CH)	Head of Regional Development
Neil Graham	(NG)	Head of Game Development
Steve Turnbull	(ST)	Head of Rugby Development Operations
Angela McCracken	(AMc)	Head of Legal & Governance
Vicky Cox	(VC)	Head of Competitions

**1. Introduction****Action****1.1 Quorum and Apologies**

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

He welcomed the attendees to the Meeting and noted apologies from I Carse. The Vice-President highlighted that the Meeting was key in moving the Rugby Development Department's strategy and budget forward.

**2. Minutes****2.1 Minutes of 13 March 2024**

The Minutes of 13 March 2024 were **APPROVED**.

**3. Actions****3.1 Actions from Previous Meeting**

It was noted that all actions were either complete or would be covered off by the agenda points during the Meeting.

#### 4. Business Reporting

##### 4.1 *Rugby Development Strategy*

The Director of Rugby Development introduced the strategy discussion and emphasized that the document which had been circulated to the CRB was an evolving document that was intended for internal reference only at this stage.

The overall strategy and its aim was outlined, explaining that the CRB has been consulted throughout the process. The consultation process that has taken place was outlined to the CRB. It was highlighted that as a result of the consultation the Rugby Development Department strategy would focus on the following key areas:

- increasing participation numbers;
- expanding the Women and Girls' game;
- improving the number and quality of volunteers;
- strengthening the performance pathway; and
- enhancing the quality of regular fixtures.

A question was asked about the implementation of the strategy, and particularly what role Scottish Rugby would play in growing participation numbers. The Director of Rugby Development noted that other unions were facing similar challenges and best practices and ideas were being shared between the unions. It also noted it was a key time for Scottish Rugby and the upcoming appointments of both the Chief Executive Officer as well as Performance Director would input into this element of the strategy.

The performance pathway was discussed. The Director of Rugby Development acknowledged that some elements would be discussed as part of this Meeting, while other elements would evolve over time. Concerns about the potential gap in the pipeline of young players were raised, the Vice-President noted that the pipeline formed a key part of the business reshaping process which was currently underway as part of the wider Scottish Rugby strategy.

The Rugby Development high-level strategic pillars were considered, discussed and ultimately **APPROVED**.

The CRB highlighted that establishing measurable KPIs would be vital in the implementation of the strategy. It was requested that the Rugby Development Department commenced work on these KPIs for the CRB's consideration at its next Meeting.

GS

##### 4.2 *Rugby Development Budget*

The Vice-President outlined that the Rugby Development Department would be presenting a provisional budget to the CRB. It highlighted that this information was highly confidential in nature and not for discussion out with the CRB.

He noted the general financial position of Scottish Rugby and highlighted that a substantial financial lose was likely to be reported for financial year 2023/24. The position was not sustainable and as such, Scottish Rugby was currently considering a number of ways of making cost savings, which may include redundancies across the business.

The Vice-President noted that the Rugby Development Department would receive 15% of the average annual turnover of Scottish Rugby (over a 4 year period) as was suggested by the Crerar Report. He noted this equated to more than other domestic rugby departments were receiving in other unions. The constitution of the 15% was still being agreed with the interim CFO as part of the budgeting process.

The Director of Rugby Development noted that the initial budget which had been presented to the CRB was based on a fixed number and highlighted that this was still subject to change once the SRU and SRL Boards had met to agree the upcoming budget. He noted that it was important to get CRB feedback on the proposed budget before it was presented to SRL, then ultimately SRU for approval.

The proposed operating model was taken as read. It was noted that all operating models were currently proposals only and were subject to consultation which make result in further changes. The key proposed changes to the operating model were outlined to the CRB. The cost implications of the proposals were outlined for the CRB's reference.

The CRB members asked a number of questions on the proposed budget and operating model. The following points were noted:

- It was asked how female participation would grow at grass roots level with potentially less people within the operating model. The Director of Rugby Development noted that they were confident they could deliver the new strategy via the proposed operating model. He reiterated however, that the operating model was subject to change as the consultation progressed.
- It was noted that a large part of the Growth and Participation Fund would be focused on state school funding and growing the school game.
- The need for the domestic and professional games to be well connected was highlighted. It was noted Ireland that established this link well. The Vice-President praised the professional teams for their willingness to work and support the domestic game. Alignment was more evident than it previously had been.

After discussion and consideration, the CRB noted that they were generally supportive of the proposed operating model, whilst being mindful that the model may change or evolve during consultation.

The Rugby Development Department then outlined to the CRB the proposed funding for the upcoming year. It was highlighted that the funding had been developed with the

principle of being as fair and balanced as possible in relation to the application of each fund available to clubs.

The main changes to the funding, which included prize funds and ticket commissions, were outlined to the CRB.

The need for changes to the travel fund were outlined and context for the proposed changes was given. Changes had been proposed but it was noted that this was an area for discussion with the CRB.

The importance of the travel subsidy in some areas of the country was highlighted by CRB members, particularly with inflationary costs being experienced by many clubs. A robust discussion was had on the effect the changes would have on different clubs. It was noted that a solution would not be reached tonight but it was useful for the Rugby Development Department to gather the views of the CRB members.

The CRB asked questions about various elements of the budget. The Head of Rugby Development Operations noted that modelling had been done, with samples of different clubs being used. It was highlighted that although some clubs would see increases and decreases in funding, many clubs would see funding at a static level. To help provide CRB members with context of these funding levels, the Head of Rugby Development Operations would share worked examples with the CRB.

ST

In relation to school funding, it was agreed that the Head of Rugby Development Operations, the Head of Regional Development and the Schools Representative would meet separately to discuss.

ST/CH  
GMc

#### 4.3 *Regions & Game Development Report*

The Regions and Game Development Report was taken as read and no further questions were asked.

#### 4.4 *Rugby Development Data and Business Report*

The Rugby Development Data and Business Report was taken as read and no further questions were asked.

#### 4.5 *Rugby Development State of the Nation Report*

It was noted that the Rugby Development State of the Nation Report would need to be updated to the membership in due course. The timing of the report needed to be considered so it came at the most helpful time for the members.

#### 4.6 *Safeguarding Report*

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

#### 4.7 *Competition Committee & Terms of Reference Update National Competition Rules*

The Head of Competition and Compliance advised that the CRB had discussed the Competition Committee terms of reference and structure at its January Meeting. Agreement had been reached on both matters but since rolling out the new structure, some feedback had been received about the Committees and its interactions with clubs and CRB.

It was proposed that the work on any restructuring of the Committees was paused and it may be revisited once there was a better understanding of the operating model and any decisions being reached by the Standing Committee on Governance.

The Head of Competition and Compliance would continue her work on updating the Committees Terms of Reference which would be circulated to the CRB for consideration and approval.

VC

#### 4.8 *National Competition Rules 2024/25*

The Head of Competition and Compliance provided the CRB with an update on the 2024/25 NCRs which were at the final stage of consultation and had seen much engagement from the clubs.

It was noted that a subgroup of CRB had been proposed for the CRB to delegate authority for them to approve the NCRs. It was **AGREED** that such delegated authority be granted.

VC

#### 4.9 *Season Structure*

The Head of Rugby Development Operations advised following the Meeting, he would circulate an update on the law trials for the CRB's reference.

#### 4.10 *Player Payment Review*

The Player Payment Review Paper was taken as read.

A commitment had been made upon conclusion of the SuperSeries for a conversation on player payment to take place with the Premiership and National 1 clubs.

This meeting had now taken place and it was apparent that it was complex matter with no unanimous solution from clubs. It had been decided to take time to consider how this is dealt with and as such the status quo would remain in place for the upcoming season.

It was likely that a subgroup would be established at the appropriate time, the Vice-President noted that he would welcome the contribution on this group of CRB members. Recommendation for approval is that we will set up small sub group to deal with this and welcome members from CRB to be part of.

## 5. **Activity Reporting**

### 5.1 *CRB Quarterly Reports*

The CRB Quarterly Reports were taken as read and no further questions were asked.

## 6. CRB Governance Approvals and Updates

The Head of Legal & Governance noted that a number of requests had been received from the membership, all of which fell under the remit of the CRB for approval. She noted the following:

### 6.1 Club Name Change – Heriot Blues

Request for approval had been made by Heriot's to drop the 'Blues' from their team names and to adopt the non-Blues version of the names. The request was **APPROVED**.

### 6.2 Associate Member Application: The Glasgow Clan

The Glasgow Clan have requested to become an Associate Member in Glasgow North. The Glasgow Clan play Unified Rugby and will join the likes of Edinburgh Inclusive, The Ayrshire Clan, The Grampian Clan, etc. in the Union's membership. The request was **APPROVED**.

### 6.3 Change to Associate Membership Application: Heriot Watt University RFC

The members register currently had two separate Heriot Watt University clubs on its list (one for the men and one for the women). The two clubs have merged to form a single Heriot Watt University RFC (with consequential amendment required to the Associate membership list for Edinburgh). The request was **APPROVED**.

### 6.4 Update on CRB Election Process and Timings

The Head of Legal & Governance advised that the current CRB members who's terms were due to come to an end in this year, would run until the AGM in accordance with the Union's Articles of Association. The Head of Legal & Governance would engage with each relevant for a regarding the election process for a new member.

**AMc**

## 7. Diversity and Inclusion Update

No updates were given.

## 8. Safeguarding Update

It was noted that those CRB members selected to sit on a Safeguarding Panel had not yet met with the Safeguarding Team. It was noted that this would be raised with the Safeguarding Team and a meeting would be set as soon as possible.

**GS**

## 9. President Update

The President updated to the CRB on a number of matters, as summarised below:

### i) AGM

## PRIVATE &amp; CONFIDENTIAL

Clubs were first notified via the President's Newsletter in April of the Date and format of the AGM.

At the Scottish Rugby Union's Board Meeting on 28 March 2024 it was agreed that the 2024 AGM will be held on the 27 November 2024 and will be online only. In addition, a finance session of the accounts would also be held, as has been done in previous years.

*ii) SRL Appointments*

It was noted that processes were ongoing to appoint a CEO and Performance Director. Updates would be provided in due course.

Once a CEO was recruited, consideration would be given to the position of CFO, the interim CFO would remain in place until then.

*iii) Budget & Strategy*

This continued to be worked on and stress tested against current market conditions. Further discussion on budget and strategy would take place at SRL and SRU Board meetings later in the month.

*iv) Professional Rugby*

Updates were given on the Women's 6 Nations, the upcoming Men's tour to the Americas, the hosting of the World Rugby Under 20s world trophy and the Edinburgh Rugby and Glasgow Warriors ends of season.

*v) Clubs*

The President noted that this was for many a busy time of the year as clubs recruited and prepared for the new season with refreshed optimism. He wished all clubs good luck for the preseason.

*vi) SCOG*

The President thanked all those who contributed to the SCOG CRB survey. He noted that the outcome and proposals of SCOG's deliberations / recommendations were awaited.

**10. AOB**

No other business was raised.

**11. Chair Remarks**

The Vice-President thanked the CRB Members for their participation in the Meeting. It noted the progress that had been made to date and the work that lay ahead.

With all business dealt with, the Vice-President closed the Meeting at 9pm.

Next Meeting: 9 July 2024

DRAFT