

**MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE SCOTTISH RUGBY CLUB RUGBY BOARD  
HELD AT 5PM ON WEDNESDAY 28 JANUARY 2026  
MONCREIFF SUITE, SCOTTISH GAS MURRAYFIELD  
& BY MICROSOFT TEAMS**

**Present:**

Keith Wallace	(KW)	President (online)
Hazel Swankie	(HS)	Vice-President
Jim O'Neill	(JON)	Glasgow South Regional Representative (online)
Gavin Stevenson	(GSt)	Premiership Representative
Eric Hugh	(EH)	National 2 (and National 4) Representative
Duncan Campbell	(DC)	Midlands Representative
Ian Dalgleish	(ID)	National 1 Representative
Mike Bruce	(MB)	Women & Girls Representative (online)
Steven Halliday	(SH)	East Regional Representative
Scott Forbes	(SF)	Borders Regional Representative
Gib McMillan	(GM)	Schools Representative (online)
John Scott	(JS)	North Regional Representative
Ed Crozier	(EC)	Glasgow North Regional Representative
Neil Sutherland	(NS)	National 3 (and National 4) Representative (online)
Mhairi Hay	(MH)	Referees Representative (online)
Gavin Scott	(GS)	Director of Rugby Development

**In Attendance:**

Neil Graham	(NG)	Head of Regional Pathways and Game Development
Chris Hildrey	(CH)	Head of Regional Development
Vicky Cox	(VC)	Head of Competitions & Compliance
Steve Turnbull	(ST)	Head of Rugby Development Operations
Holly Sinclair	(HSin)	Business Operations & Support Manager
Faye Henderson	(FH)	Head of Safeguarding
Paul Denton	(PD)	Chair of Club Game Strategy Sub-Committee
Kevin Quinn	(KQ)	Chair of Championship Committee Review Committee (online)
Dougie Belmore	(DB)	Chair of Championship Committee (online)

**1. Introduction**

**ACTION**

*1.1 Quorum and Apologies*

The Vice-President welcomed Members to the first Meeting of 2026. She noted that a quorum was present and opened the Meeting.

*1.2 Chair Opening Remarks*

The Vice-President provided Members with an update on the meeting held in December regarding the SRRA's request for a review of the constitution. It was noted that agreement had been reached by the CRB to support the SRRA's request and the proposition of this being reviewed by SCOG. The Vice-President noted she had subsequently spoken with the Chair of the SRU and Bobby Frazer, and a formal request had been submitted to proceed with the review. It was agreed that Bobby Frazer would chair the review group and would include Mark Walker and Maxine Manditsch. A report was expected to be provided at April's CRB Meeting.

The Vice-President provided an update on the ongoing SCOG review of CRB, advising that a sub-group structure had been established, comprising two groups of four members to ensure broader coverage of the work. It was noted that several meetings had taken place over the preceding months. The next steps were outlined to be the preparation of a discussion paper, followed by a meeting to update the CRB on the findings. The paper would then be issued to the Foras as part of the consultation process and subsequently submitted to the SRU Board for consideration and recommendations.

## **2. Actions**

### *2.1 Actions from Previous Meeting*

- 2.1.1 Fixture Fulfillments: The Vice President requested for the Head of Competitions and Compliance to draft questions which would need addressed to send to Chairs and Secretaries of the Foras for feedback at their meetings. **COMPLETE***
- 2.1.2 The Vice President, Head of Competitions and Compliance and Head of Regional Pathways and Game Development would meet to address the considerations for player movement and formation of the working group. **COMPLETE***
- 2.1.3 The list of (W&G Strategy Review Session) meeting dates was agreed to be shared with CRB Members. **COMPLETE***
- 2.1.4 The Vice President requested Members to promote and encourage sign-ups for the Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport course. **COMPLETE***
- 2.1.5 With reference to the draft Player Payment policy, the Vice President suggested the note of no more than 2 club employees playing per match could be detailed in both the NCRs and the Player Payment policy. **COMPLETE***
- 2.1.6 The Vice President requested a copy of the Premiership Participation agreement to be distributed. **COMPLETE – Premiership Agreement no longer in existence.***
- 2.1.7 CRB Introduction Paper: the Caledonia North Regional Representative suggested adding key contact information such as who each CRB Representative is, the Rugby Development contacts and Competitions Committee representatives. It was agreed for this to be added. **ONGOING***

## **3. CRB Quarterly Reports**

### *3.1 Report from each CRB Member*

The Caledonia North Representative noted recent positive engagement between himself and members of the Rugby Development Regional Development Team, with partners including sportscotland and High Life Highland.

### *3.2 CRB Member Questions for Rugby Development*

With reference to a question submitted to the Rugby Development Department, the Borders Regional Representative discussed the international ticket offer for schools

and youth being removed. The President noted there were good pricing structures for several of the recent Quilter Nations Series tickets. The Glasgow North Regional Representative noted his strong concerns around these not being affordable and accessible, with Members noting the need to encourage and facilitate youths to watch international games at the stadium, including the possibility of the Women's games. It was agreed for the Rugby Development Department to look into the possibility of offering schools and youth ticket offers.

ST

With reference to the response to his question regarding the grouping and participation in the East Regional Cup competitions, the Edinburgh Regional Representative noted his concerns with the standard of the Cup and noted he believed it put teams in non-competitive fixtures. The Head of Competitions and Compliance thanked the Edinburgh Regional Representative for his feedback and requested from him a list of other teams who were facing challenges in this space.

The decline in male adult rugby participation was discussed, with Members highlighting the number of cancelled games. The current Club Investment Fund model being aimed towards funding all clubs and not targeting specific clubs was noted. The National 1 Representative noted travel was an issue for the National Leagues and suggested they could do with further financial assistance. The Head of Rugby Development Operations noted the need to look at the investment over the next few years in line with key strategic areas. He suggested doing this in conjunction with looking at other strategic areas to attract and retain players in the game, including: the season structure, investment into the youth game and focussing on transition and retention. Members noted the social attitudes of players also needed to be taken into account.

A review into the male adult season structure was discussed noting the last review was 5 years ago. Members noted the need to be ambitious with changes or trials, ensuring a game that was enjoyable. The need to listen to the needs of what both clubs and players need was highlighted.

With regards to the ongoing annual planning of the adult season structure, the Head of Competitions and Compliance noted several groups' reviews were underway with a view to bring the groups together to determine the season structure for the National games and Cups.

The Chair of Club Game Strategy Sub-Committee noted his observation in club's defining sustainability; one as a willingness to change and support rugby in the community, with the other as a status quo. He noted the former were clubs who desired to be commercially viable, understanding the need to change.

The Midlands Representative joined the meeting at 5:30PM.

#### **4. Safeguarding**

##### *4.1 Safeguarding Annual Report*

The paper was taken as read. Members welcomed the report and had a detailed discussion, captured below in combination with the Safeguarding Governance Framework paper.

## 4.2 Safeguarding Governance Framework

The paper was taken as read.

The Head of Safeguarding thanked Members who attended the recent safeguarding Board training.

So presented a summary of the reports provided to the CRB, noting the Governance Framework was an outcome of the recent audit, noting the need to provide clarity on roles, decision-making and reporting. She then provided an overview of the oversight of CRB safeguarding in the community game.

Members were asked for any feedback on the information shared, with the following discussions noted:

- It was noted that the CRBs input would involve cascading key messages to clubs, highlighting clubs who were recurrently non-compliant.
- In accordance with the Safeguarding Everyone policy, the requirement for Safeguarding Officers was clarified as mandatory for clubs who coach youths, and were recommended for ones who only have adult teams.
- It was suggested by Members for more speciality support to CRB Members to be able to better support clubs.

The Head of Safeguarding proceeded to note that the Safeguarding Advisory Panel hadn't progressed at the intended pace. She proposed the recommendation that the group be disbanded and a new sub-committee be established that included a CRB Member and 2 - 3 members from the advisory panel. They would then report to the CRB at their quarterly meetings. Members were in agreement of this recommendation. It was agreed for the Head of Safeguarding and the Vice-President to meet and provide suggestions of composition of the sub-committee to the CRB.

HS/FH

The Head of Safeguarding continued to present to Members, providing a summary of key achievements from 2025, including:

- A change of PVG legislation
- Safeguarding Audit
- Safeguarding team investment with an additional role
- Believable path
- Safeguarding Everyone Policy – welcomed change and adoption at the clubs

She highlighted relevant areas of the Believable Path impacting CRB, including leadership and governance, adult safeguarding and safer recruitment, noting a new process and system was being trialled, using Experian to process PVGs. Members requested user guidance to using the system which the Head of Safeguarding noting would be provided.

FH

It was queried, in relation to the new legislation, what the uptake in committee members PVGs was. The Head of Safeguarding noted there had been a good uptake of PVG processing for committee members, with plans for spot checks.

The Head of Safeguarding presented the year-on-year figures relating to safeguarding cases, noting a reduction in overall cases. With increased education and awareness of

safeguarding practices and processes, it was noted there would be an expectation for this to increase. She discussed the breakdown of case categories, including the number referred to external agencies. Members discussed the categorisation of 'coach behaviour' with the suggestion of determining how many of those reported had completed any safeguarding training and completed the PVG process. The Head of Safeguarding noted she would investigate these statistics. The Referees Representative noted to additionally determine how many of the cases were rugby-related and how many were not. It was suggested for the language and definition of a 'case'/'reported' to be clarified.

FH

The National 3 Representative joined the meeting at 6PM.

It was requested for the Head of Safeguarding to share the presentation with Members.

FH

The Head of Safeguarding presented to Members an overview of safeguarding compliance, with the largest area of non-compliance being training. She noted this would be an area of focus next season. She noted the need to appoint a North safeguarding tutor to service that area.

She presented to members several upcoming priorities for 2026, including data and systems implementation, mixed ability rugby clubs, club resources to managing risk, noting the need for the processes and requirements to be easily understood. The need for making it easier to find who the club's Safeguarding Officers was, was suggested by the National 2 Representative. It was noted that Scottish Rugby provide poster templates to clubs to display this information, with the Safeguarding Support Visits by the Rugby Development Department ensuring these were visible.

The recruitment and retention of Safeguarding Officers was discussed, noting the average retention in this role was approximately 7 years. It was suggested that sharing the role across 2-3 safeguarding officers (dependent on the size of club) could make it more appealing and reduce the risk.

It was clarified that the Safeguarding Annual Report was for internal use only and would not be shared with clubs or published on the webpage.

The Women and Girls Representative questioned a previously agreed action of marking which papers were for internal use only. It was noted that all papers going forward would be marked whether they were suitable for sharing.

HSin

The Head of Safeguarding noted she would share the Scottish Rugby Club Rugby Board Safeguarding training (delivered by Petronas Safeguarding on 14 January) presentation with Members to share with their clubs if appropriate.

FH

The remit of CRB over safeguarding Scottish Rugby pathway programmes was questioned. The Head of Safeguarding noted she would discuss with the Head of Regional Pathways and Game Development where this responsibility would lie.

FH/NG

## **5. Finance**

### *5.1 Rugby Development Budget 2026-27*

The paper taken as read.

With reference to the paper, the Head of Rugby Development Operations highlighted the timelines of the budget process to Members, noting the stages of CRB input and approval.

He noted the proposed areas of investment detailed in the paper were informed from the October CRB Meeting and the Finance Working Group's recent meeting. He further noted the budget was indicative based on the predicted revenue. Several key areas of proposed increased investment into direct club and school funding to increase participation and active players including investment into were highlighted, including:

- Mini and alternative formats
- Workforce development to grow female participation in state schools.

The Head of Rugby Development Operations welcomed feedback from Members on the indicative budget proposed in the paper, to inform next proposal at the April CRB Meeting. Member's feedback included the following discussions:

The National 2 Representative questioned staff costs remaining stable. The Head of Rugby Development Operations referenced the paper, noting a potential benchmarking review which could inform this. It was noted that the Rugby Development Department's staffing structure was stable, having recently completed a restructure.

The Glasgow North Regional Representative requested clarity on the 15%. The Director of Rugby Development noted a paper had previously been produced and shared with Members, which would be sent to all again.

**HSin**

With reference to the Finance Working Group's findings within the paper, any feedback on the 'stop, start, continue' was requested to be sent to the Head of Rugby Development Operations.

The Director of Rugby Development referenced the recent Scottish Government budget announcement was positive for sport, noting an increase to sportscotland funding which Rugby Development would hope to benefit from.

He provided an update to Members on the Cashback programme's application, noting the Scottish Government were not reinvesting into the next phase due to strategic Government reasons. It was noted that this funding went directly to the 13 Cashback environments and would not impact the budget alignment.

With reference to team participation in the paper, the Caledonia Midlands Representative requested clarification on the vocabulary of this, whether it refers to 15-a-side teams only or wider.

**ST**

The Schools Representative joined the Meeting at 18:25

### *5.1.2 Rugby Development YTD*

The paper was taken as read.

## 5.2 *Scottish Rugby Charity and Philanthropic Investment Paper*

The paper was taken as read.

The Director of Rugby Development noted the timeline was for establishment of the Scottish Rugby Charity in May/June 2026 and suggested any members who had charitable experience to connect with him. The Glasgow North Regional Representative noted he had sent a paper with examples of his experience in philanthropic gifting, to the Director of Rugby Development. Members were asked for any questions, which included the following discussions:

- Members noted the existence of other rugby charities and the need to not dilute their donations. It was noted that the donors who would be targeted would be different than those who would donate to these.
- The ringfencing of donations was discussed. It was noted that the donations would be restricted or unrestricted and they would not be included within the 15%.
- It was noted that the donations would be entirely externally funded.

Sponsorship was discussed and was noted that this was overseen by SRL, with several programmes and assets which would be targeted with a new Rugby Development specific role now in place.

## 6. **Strategy**

### 6.1 *Key Measures Progress Tracker*

The paper was taken as read.

With reference to the paper, the Director of Rugby Development noted Adult Male Participation numbers were down, comparative to the previous season at this point. Rugby Development Teams were now in a position to have more 'in season' data than previously which would allow for better understanding of where competitions structures could be changed to better increase playing numbers and adapt to modern lifestyles. The data would be interrogated further to understand the trends, rationale and impacts across the whole game.

### 6.2 *State School Strategy Report*

The paper was taken as read.

The Director of Rugby Development noted positive State School numbers, with the need to determine how these players transition into club environments.

### 6.3 *W&G Strategy*

The Director of Rugby Development noted his thanks to Members who inputted into the Women and Girls strategy review sessions in November.

He highlighted the numbers in this space had increased comparative to the start of the strategy.

He noted the ongoing High Performance review into the womens game and the possibility of changes and impact on the community game.

#### *6.3.1 W&G Strategy Report*

The paper was taken as read.

#### *6.3.2 W&G Strategy Sessions Findings*

The paper was taken as read.

#### *6.4 Standing Committee on Club Game Strategy Report*

The paper was taken as read.

The Chair of Club Game Strategy Sub-Committee noted the first meeting had recently taken place with a full Committee membership, providing a summary of the meeting.

He noted the purpose of the Committee noting the following to Members:

- The Committee's desire to add value to the Rugby Development strategy and promotion of rugby nationally.
- The expectation of the CRB to challenge the group's suggestions and reports.
- He noted the review process of the current strategy would include reviewing each pillar, to inform the future strategy, providing scrutiny and accountability.

KPIs relating to the strategy were discussed, noting the Committee would use the existing strategy's KPIs, with the main focus over the next 18 months to inform the KPIs for the next strategy.

## **7. Rugby**

### *7.1 Regional Reports*

The paper was taken as read.

With reference to the paper, the Head of Regional Development elaborated on the work undertaken with regards to increased DO investment, finalising PAs and IAs and aligning DO KPIs to the strategy. He noted the complex space of the DOs and the third-party investment including strong relationships with bodies such as sportscotland.

He noted the successful update from the rollout of Rugby Matters courses, covering key topics of supporting the game, noting the need for ongoing review and amendments to the workshops.

The Midlands Representative referred to sportscotland's funding themes and whether these could be aligned to clubs and projects. The Head of Regional Development noted there were regional discrepancies which would be factored in when relaying these themes to clubs.

The Head of Regional Pathways and Game Development provided a staffing update to Members, noting Steven Meenagh had recently joined as Coach Development Manager and Roddy Deans had been appointed as Regional Pathway and Game Development Manager, East, starting in April.

He noted the successful embedding of the Aligned Pathway with the National Talent Pathway, with the first festival (U17) having taken place on 25 January. He noted that the players at the festival represented 60 individual clubs/schools. He thanked all who attended the November Regional Pathway and Blueprint roadshows, which were co-hosted with High Performance colleagues. He noted a summary webinar would be recorded and distributed.

The Premiership Representative highlighted the success of the recent Boys Schools Cup Finals, noting they were well run and managed, with a good standard of rugby. He suggested organising the finals on a Saturday each year, suggesting it would be an attractive idea for a potential sponsor.

## *7.2 Competitions & Compliance Report*

The paper was taken as read.

The Head of Competitions and Compliance thanked Members for their support at the Youth Cup and Boys Schools Cup finals.

With reference to the report, she noted all leagues were progressing, with some postponement of fixtures to May due to the recent bad weather, noting her team were working with clubs to bring these games forward where possible.

She updated Members that next season's planning was underway, with Premiership and National 1 working groups having already met, with meetings with National 2, 3 and 4 groups, and the regional leagues' committees ongoing. She noted the possibility of the male schools and youth game being scheduled in pre-and post-Christmas, which would be informed by input from High Performance.

With regards to player movement, she updated members that a working group met in December, noting the next meeting would include proposals from club members.

She further updated Members on Club XV, with the fixture planned for 13 February, at Donnybrook, competing for the Dalriada Cup. She referenced the training squad, noting the excitement of the players and noted her thanks to the training team involved. Members noted the positivity on the re-implementation of this competition and the potential to strengthen the Inter-District competition.

With reference to the appendix in the report, she noted a standard set of questions had been supplied to members to discuss with their clubs, to gather feedback on fixture fulfilment and season structure. Feedback was requested to be provided to her prior to the draft proposal in April.

The Midlands Regional Representative shared good practice in his forum, inviting the Competitions Committee to his meetings, acknowledging it worked well.

The Glasgow North Regional Representative noted his concern around the Womens structure and Cup competition, with his suggestion to explore regulations in Regional Leagues to be more flexible, including for 2XV. He referenced a letter from a Women's Club Coach expressing their concern over no fixtures being scheduled in December or January. The Head of Competitions and Compliance noted that the wider High Performance pathway review into the Women and Girls space could impact this and highlighted there were several upcoming meetings regarding the womens season structure.

### 7.3 *Championship Committee Review Committee (CCRC) Update*

The paper was taken as read.

The Chair of Championship Committee Review Committee and the Chair of Championship Committee joined the Meeting at 18:50.

The Vice-President noted that a short life committee (Championship Committee Review Committee (CCRC)) had been established looking into the Championship Committees and noted Kevin Quinn was Chair of the Committee, with Dougie Belmore also a member.

With reference to the paper, she read the purpose of the Committee to Members, noting it's composition, highlighting several CRB Members were part of this.

She asked Members for feedback on the paper. The below discussions were noted:

- The Glasgow South Regional Representative requested clarity on whether the recommendation was for the Championship Committee to include a CRB representative. The Chair of Championship Committee Review Committee noted that the terms of reference would make clear the interactions between Competitions Committees (the Convenor) and the CRB. He noted the Committee was requesting CRB input on whether CRB members were to be included in any competitions committee and if so, which.
- The Chair of Championship Committee added there was a need for clear terms of reference, roles and responsibilities (including the need for Convenor at all committees) and clarification that the role of CRB in these competitions committees were as observers, to help and assist committee members with decision making and highlight any issues to their clubs. This would improve communication and relationships.
- The collation of information of practices in other unions and sports was discussed. It was noted the Committee completed a benchmarking exercise against other unions and sports and noted there were several models in place. It was noted that the current volunteer base structure, supported by staff, worked well with improvements needed with regards to communication.
- The process of determining which clubs were consulted was discussed. It was noted that several clubs who frequently engaged with the Competitions Committees were contacted for input.
- The outcome of sanctions on lower-league clubs who were struggling with playing numbers was raised by the Vice-President. It was noted by the Chair of Championship Committee the requirement for consistency with the NCRs across all competitions would need to be adhered to. He highlighted avenues

such as Game On and playing to different regulations were options, but clubs may not be aware of these.

- Members raised the challenges around committees and clubs understanding the NCRs. Members suggested the length of the NCRs be shortened, standardising generic information across all and to simplify the language. It was noted the Competitions Committees fed back into the annual NCR consultation, but there was a need to engage with more clubs. The Head of Competitions and Compliance noted the consultation would be open to clubs in February. It was agreed that the East region would pilot a method to engage more clubs in the consultation. It was suggested for any changes in NCRs to be highlighted at the Community Game Conference.

VC

In reference to a previously noted discussion, the National 3 Representative requested for invites from the various Competitions Committees to be sent to CRB to attend the meetings as observers.

VC

He also queried why there were separate male and female championship committees. The Vice-President noted a paper was produced at a previous CRB Meeting, noting the womens championship committee was new and evolved for a specific purpose to grow the womens game. It could be looked at in the future.

The Caledonia North Regional Representative noted several challenges in the Caledonia Competitions Committee, including a disconnect between them and clubs. He suggested the need for change for this committee and the possible suggestion of more radical options/suggestions than presented.

The Midlands Representative suggested piloting a similar model to the youth rugby model as an example which had been implemented by the Rugby Development Department and suggested considering at a regional level, the role of Rugby Development in these. He noted the Caledonia Spirit of Rugby initiative as a possible model which would be used elsewhere.

The Head of Competitions and Compliance agreed to circulate a draft of the terms of reference which had previously been created, for Member feedback at the April CRB Meeting.

VC

The Vice-President thanked those on the review committee for their time taken to propose suggestions. She asked members for agreement on the terms of reference for each of the groups being reviewed with pilots in the East and Caledonia areas as the first step. The regional Competitions Committees would be reviewed at a later date due to the ongoing SCOG review and potential change in governance. Members were in agreement of the suggested process.

The Chair of Championship Committee Review Committee and the Chair of Championship Committee left the Meeting at 7:40PM.

#### *7.4. Match Official Panel & Talent Pathway - Recommendations*

The paper was taken as read.

The Head of Regional Pathways and Game Development thanked the Referees Representative for her participation in the Match Official Panel working group and

noted there had been good collaboration between the group and the SRRA societies. He noted the objective was to improve support with resources to match officials and to ensure a pipeline of match officials to support the club and High Performance games.

He asked Members for feedback or questions on the paper. The National 2 Representative questioned if reducing numbers within the National Panel would cause more match officials to drop out of the game. The Head of Regional Pathways and Game Development noted that although the National Panel mirrored the number of leagues, the support to the Panel would be more effective with fewer numbers. He added that those who dropped out of the Panel would be supported by the societies.

The Head of Regional Pathways and Game Development requested Members' agreement on the recommendations in the paper, including the establishment of a match official academy and to reduce the size of the National Panel, to be able to serve them better. Members were in agreement of the proposals.

It was noted that the implementation plan for the proposals would be reported at the April CRB Meeting.

#### *7.5 Coach Learning Pathway Update*

The paper was taken as read.

#### *7.6 Youth Marketing Approach Update*

The paper was taken as read.

#### *7.7 SBDU National Sevens Strategy ToR*

The paper was taken as read.

The Vice-President noted that several meetings had taken place since the last paper was provided to Members, which included Scottish Rugby representatives and club members. She added that meetings were underway with Premiership and National 1 groups which would be fed into these discussions.

The Borders Regional Representative noted the composition of the proposed sub-committee had been reduced to 6.

The Director of Rugby Development suggested the need to review the full male adult season structure holistically.

It was noted by Members for the need for clubs to understand how they can benefit from offering 7s at their club; such as a turn up and play 7s, the offer of an alternative format, the possibility to increase membership and participation at all levels and genders, in addition to determining the role of 7s at Scottish rugby. The Head of Regional Pathways and Game Development added that the scope of the pathway of 7s into international programmes was beyond our reach, noting the national structure of the 7s programme was to develop 15-a-side players and the need to connect in with the national strategy.

The timeline suggested in the paper was discussed, noting the need to ensure a high-quality process and output, requesting clarity on who would be leading it. The Borders Regional Representative noted a substantive amount of work had been done to date, to gather information which would form the base of the report. It was suggested to amend some language within the paper including 'strategic plans', and create a revised terms of reference.

The Borders Regional Representative asked Members for approval on the approach detailed in the paper; the implementation of a short-life sub-group to inform the role of 7s. Members were in agreement of the formation of a sub-group. The Vice-President noted she would meet with the Borders Regional Representative to determine membership of the group and timelines for the project that aligned with other work.

HS/SF

## **8. People & Governance**

### *8.1 Quarterly Regulatory Statistics*

The paper was taken as read.

With reference to the paper, the high percentage of referee abuse was discussed, clarifying the abuse was conducted by both players and sideline behaviour. The Head of Regional Pathways and Game Development noted this was a societal issue and a rise had been reported across all home nations and other sports. The risk of losing match officials as a result of this was highlighted by the Referees Representative.

It was discussed what constitutes a red card for abuse, with the Head of Regional Pathways and Game Development noting that his team were supporting young match officials in this space, and they were actively encouraging referees to report any behaviour which they believed was abuse.

### *8.2 Queensferry Rugby Club*

The Head of Competitions and Compliance noted an application had been submitted for Queensferry Rugby club to be an associate member club.

Members were in agreement of support of the application.

## **9. President Update**

The President provided an update to Members on several matters, as summarised below:

- i)* He referenced his recent completion of his second tour of the North, having visited 10 clubs and 2 schools. He noted his reflections of the tour, including several areas of good collaboration and innovative use of clubhouses, and provided insights into difficulties with travel. He noted he was impressed with the Cashback programme at Northfield Academy.
- ii)* With regards to recognition of club players who served the game, he noted if Members had clubs who lost a player, to notify himself and Graham Law.

He also noted that Captains Run's were used as a reward, providing the opportunity to meet players. He noted to Members if they were aware of anyone in their clubs who were experiencing difficult times, to contact himself and Graham Law.

#### **10. AOB**

The Glasgow South Regional Representative noted the lack of awareness of club's understanding Temporary Total Disablement (TTD) and it being applicable to U18s. It was suggested for Members to encourage their clubs to take TTD out at the start of the season and increase their awareness of the ages that it covers.

**ALL CRB**

The Glasgow North Regional Representative noted that Ellon Rugby had recently withdrawn from the leagues and he requested support from Rugby Development to them. The Caledonia North Regional Representative noted the club were focused on rebuilding and exploring alternative formats of the game to keep players engaged.

The Head of Regional Pathways and Game Development provided an update on the Community Game Conference in May. He noted the date of the conference was 22 May, with registrations opening shortly. He noted discussions were underway finalising workshop presenters and guest speakers and more information would be communicated shortly.

The Edinburgh Regional Representative suggested highlighting to the community game the number of successful age banding applications this season. It was suggested for this to be relayed to clubs via Club Comms. The Head of Competitions and Compliance suggested this could be via Club Comms.

**VC**

The communication around the Mens 6 Nations launch event was discussed by Members, noting the need to improve this for any future similar events.

The Chair of Club Game Strategy Sub-Committee noted his thanks to Members for the invite to the Meeting.

#### **11. Chair Remarks**

With all business dealt with, the Vice President thanked all for their attendance and closed the Meeting at 9PM.

**Next Meeting: 1 April 2026**