

NOTES ON THE RFU COUNCIL MEETING

Held at Twickenham - 17th April 2015

The meeting was chaired by the President, Jonathan Dance.

1. Nominations Standing Committee Report

(Jim Coulson - Chairman of the Nominations Standing Committee)

- i. Council approved the following recommendations for the 2015/16 season:

Representatives on World Rugby	Bill Beaumont
	John Spencer
Immediate Past President	Jonathan Dance
National Members	Richard Hill
	Phil Vickery
Women & Girls' Representative	Deborah Griffin
- ii. Council agreed that the following Council members should sit on the Nominations Standing Committee for the terms indicated:
Simon Collyer-Bristow (1 year)
Jim Coulson (1 year)
John Cunningham (2 years)
David Ewing (2 years)
- iii. Council also agreed the appointment of **Genevieve Glover**, who is a member of Wasps FC, as the Independent Member on the Nominations Standing Committee for 2 years
- iv. All of the above appointments will take effect from the 2015 Annual General Meeting.

2. Council Standing Orders

(Jeff Blackett - Chairman of the Governance Committee)

- i. Jeff Blackett presented the Council Standing Orders for 2015/16, but advised that further work needed to be done on the section on confidentiality and that this would be brought back to the June Council meeting.
- ii. Council approved the Council Standing Orders, noting the further work required on confidentiality.

3. Goggles Trial Extension

(Jeff Blackett - Chairman of the Governance Committee)

Council approved that the goggle trial be extended until the end of the 2015/16 season.

4. New Rules of Play

(Jeff Blackett - Chairman of the Governance Committee)

- i. Council approved the continued roll out of the New Rules of Play as follows:
 - a. the Under 11s New Rules of Play will be rolled out on a mandatory basis, across all Constituent Bodies, in Clubs and schools in England from September 2015 and thereafter;
 - b. the Under 12s New Rules of Play will be rolled out on a discretionary basis, across all Constituent Bodies, in Clubs and schools in England from September 2015 and thereafter;
 - c. The Under 14s New Rules of Play will be rolled out on a trial basis in the three pilot constituencies from September 2015
- ii. Jeff Blackett brought to Council's attention the notable change that Rules of Play for the Under 11s and below will now be mandatory in both Clubs and, following agreement, the Independent Prep schools.
- iii. Council delegated to the Governance Committee the finalising of the Rules of Play in advance of the 2015/16 season.

5. Age Grade Competition Review

(Mark Saltmarsh - Head of Education Development)

Council approved the thirteen specific elements of the Age Grade Competition Review (Appendix 1).

6. Compensation Advisory Panel

(Geoff Simpson - Chairman of the Compensation Advisory Panel)

- i. Council approved the terms of reference for the Compensation Advisory Panel (Appendix 2).
- ii. A detailed list of recommendations will be presented to the June Council meeting for approval.

7. Offshore Travel

(Malcolm Wharton - Chairman of the Community Game Board)

- i. Council approved the principles and policy for funding of offshore travel from season 2016/17 (Appendix 3).
- ii. Council also approved the inclusion of Guernsey Women in funding arrangements from season 2015/16 at an estimated cost to the Union of £17,500 per season with an equal amount being funded by Guernsey Women).
- iii. Council asked the Governance Committee to consider whether any regulations should be put into place to restrict/control additional offshore teams wishing to enter the RFU leagues.

8. Adult Competition Review

(Malcolm Wharton - Chairman of the Community Game Board)

- i. Council agreed to delay the implementation of the recommendations of the Adult Competition Review (except those pertaining to rugby for 2nd and lower XVs, namely recommendations 15 to 21 inclusive) for twelve months to undertake further consultation to assist Council in its decision making.
- ii. Council also agreed to request the Adult Competition Review Implementation Group, under the supervision of the CGB, to conduct this further consultation, including a full Club survey.

9. AGM 2015 Calling Notice

(Jeff Blackett - Chairman of the Governance Committee)

- i. Under Rule changes approved by the game at the 2014 AGM there will only be one Calling Notice.
- ii. Council approved the Calling Notice for the 2015 AGM.
- iii. The AGM will be held at The Royal Garden Hotel, Kensington High Street, London W8 4PT on Friday 12th June 2015 at 5.00pm.

10. Chief Executive's Report

(Ian Ritchie - Chief Executive Officer)

i. Senior England Squad

- a. England finished second in the 2014 RBS Six Nations on points difference behind Ireland.
- b. An internal review with coaches and management will take place in April.
- c. The senior coaching team will coach the England XV, who will play against the Barbarians on 31st May.
- d. There will be staggered mini camps from 8th June and a full RWC camp from 22nd June. The squad will train in Denver from 11th July to 26th July and are then in and out of camp through to the 13th September when all of the RWC squads arrive in England for the tournament.

ii. International Player Development

- a. The Under 20s won their Six Nations tournament, winning four of their five matches.
- b. The Women's senior team came fourth in their tournament.
- c. The Under 18s are in Toulouse for the Rugby Europe competition; they beat Portugal by 80 points in their first fixture.
- d. The Men's 7s lost in the Hong Kong quarter-final to Fiji, who went on to win the tournament. The squad went on to win in Japan to move into fourth place in the series, which would qualify GB for the Olympics.
- e. The Women's 7s have three tournaments left to get from their current sixth place to fourth to qualify GB for the Olympics.

iii. Professional Rugby

- a. A new five year agreement has been signed with the Championship Clubs, which will see an uplift in central funding.
- b. Negotiations continue with Premiership Rugby Limited (PRL) on the principles for a new agreement. There have been no formal discussions on the promotion/relegation issue.

iv. Rugby Development

- a. The fourth national playing census took place over a two week period in late March; analysis is underway. Data from the third national playing census (October 2014) is being used to target Clubs that have expressed an interest in establishing an extra team.
- b. Completion of the Sport England facilities funding has taken place successfully.
- c. Work is currently underway with 94 Local Authorities on the development of local playing pitch strategies.

- d. Excellent feedback has been received on the Nat West Rugby Force, especially on the workshops that are currently being run. Over 650 Clubs are expected to stage activity over the weekend of 27th & 28th June.
- e. New online concussion awareness/education modules for the Community Game were launched on 1st March.
- f. Over 9,000 players are now registered at 264 O₂ Touch Centres with an additional 7,500 players active in O₂ Touch Leagues. Over 95% of the centres are now using the digital platform and app, which is improving the accuracy of the data collected
- g. England Counties beat Scotland 35-3 and France 24-15. England Students beat Portugal 32-16 whilst England Students Development lost 15-22 to France.
- v. **World Rugby** (formerly IRB)
Meetings are taking place with the Home Unions, Six Nations and PRL on the Global Season Calendar prior to the World Rugby Tier One CEO meeting on the same subject in Dublin on 11th May.
- vi. **RWC 2015**
Following the resignation of Debbie Jevans, for personal reasons, on 27th March, Stephen Brown has been appointed Managing Director of ER2015 with immediate effect. Stephen Brown is already on the ER2015 Board and will thus provide good continuity. The RFU, World Rugby and other key stakeholders are all comfortable that the change will not affect the delivery of the tournament. Stephen Brown will retain his position as the RFU's Chief Financial Officer.

11. Ticketing and Hospitality Review Update

(Mike Cordell - Chairman of the International Rugby Ticket Sub Committee & Sophie Goldschmidt - Commercial Director)

- i. Mike Cordell and Sophie Goldschmidt gave a joint presentation to Council on the Ticketing and Hospitality Review.
- ii. The Ticketing & Hospitality Review is about optimising the RFU's ticket sales and pricing strategy for the good of the game, taking into account the needs of clubs and is not about maximising revenues.
- iii. The Game will see no reduction in the allocation of or quality of the tickets that it receives and it is likely that there will be an opportunity to allocate more tickets to the Game.
- iv. The review has been discussed with the IRTSC, which has agreed to support the recommendation to increase the number of pricing categories from the current 5 to 7. This will allow a fairer pricing breakdown based on seat location. Given the size of Twickenham stadium it was agreed that certain categories were currently too broad to charge the same price for such a variety of seat locations.
- v. The IRTSC has also agreed to support the recommendation to price each match individually based on the anticipated demand for tickets. This is an extension of the current practice whereby matches are banded to determine pricing strategy.
- vi. The overall objective is to make better use of the stadium to the benefit of the whole Game.
- vii. Recommendations for ticket prices for the 2016 Six Nations will come to the June Council meeting.

12. Financial Report

(Stephen Brown - Chief Financial Officer)

- i. The third quarter results show the RFU to be on budget.
- ii. Investment in the Game (professional & community) stands at £55.5M against a budget of £54.8m.
- iii. On capital investment, 90% of the stadium upgrade has now been committed and the CRM project has been completed.
- iv. The headcount remains flat; 60% of the workforce are directly working on rugby.
- v. The balance sheet remains strong and the banks are keen to support future development.
- vi. Cash is also strong due to high cash deposits from RWC ticket sales.
- vii. The debenture sale programme has been deferred, whilst work continues on refining the offers to be made available.
- viii. Work on the 2015/16 budget is well advanced. This will be a complex year due to the RWC, loss of Autumn internationals and only two home matches in the Six Nations. The budget will shortly be circulated and will be discussed by the Board at its May meeting.

13. ER2015 Update

(Andy Cosslett - Chairman ER2015, Stephen Brown - Managing Director ER2015 & Neil Snowball - Operations Director ER2015)

- i. Thanks to the efforts of Debbie Jevans and her team, tournament preparations are in good shape and ticket sales are on budget.
- ii. Close to 2m tickets have been sold, which represents 80% of the overall budget.
- iii. The official resale programme has been launched, which enables those with tickets that they cannot use to sell them at face value. The programme has been well received.

- iv. ER2015 is seeking more tickets from Rugby World Cup Limited (RWCL) to offer to the public. These are tickets that other Unions, sponsors and hospitality companies are handing back to RWCL.
- v. The next release of tickets to the public will be on 28th April.
- vi. There has been 97% acceptance from the volunteers and there will be a launch of the volunteer programme at Milton Keynes on 16th May.
- vii. The International Trophy Tour is almost complete.
- viii. The UK tour will commence with 100 days to go.
- ix. The Festival of Rugby programme is proving popular with 85 events approved and 1000 expressions of interest.
- x. From an operations perspective focus has switched to delivery mode.
- xi. Work continues to make sure that all of the match venues and team bases are ready and safe. Test events have been organised at a number of the venues to make sure that all of the plans are appropriate.
- xii. The Olympic Stadium work is on schedule.
- xiii. Twickenham Stadium will be handed over to ER105 in June.
- xiv. There will be fifteen Fanzones across the country, including Trafalgar Square in London. The sites vary in capacity from 2k to 15k. In total there is an opportunity to engage with 1m people through the Fanzones.
- xv. ER2015 continues to liaise with transport providers to ensure that spectators can get to and from the venues as easily as possible.

14. Professional Game Board Report

(Ian Metcalf - Chairman of the Professional Game Board)

- i. Work continues on the process for the tendering of the Academy Licenses to start from season 2016/17.
- ii. Discussions are ongoing about restrictions/approvals required on Clubs permanently moving grounds.
- iii. Terms of Reference have been agreed for the Sports Science Advisory Group.
- iv. PRL Continues to be concerned about the limit of 12 months and the maximum compensation of £250k for any player injured on international duty.
- v. Ian Metcalf noted that John Spencer was standing down after 16 years on the PGB and Sport England and thanked him for his service.

15. Community Game Board Report

(Malcolm Wharton - Chairman of the Community Game Board)

- i. The CGB has recently:
 - a. Endorsed the "Rugbysafe" programme;
 - b. Approved the geographic locations for "Spirit of Rugby" projects;
 - c. Agreed to the continuation of the Champions Trophy;
 - d. Debated and agreed revisions to offshore travel funding;
 - e. Established a task group to look at "Styles of Play";
 - f. Agreed Cup competition funding; and
 - g. Discussed the development of a 7s strategy.
- ii. Work has concluded on the payment of players (at Level 3 and below) and recommendations for regulation change will be presented to the June Council meeting.
- iii. Malcolm Wharton also highlighted the priorities of the CGB and its Sub Committees (appendix 4).

16. Governance Committee Report

(Jeff Blackett - Chairman of the Governance Committee)

- i. Governance is currently reviewing regulations and will propose changes to the June Council meeting.
- ii. Following the Governance Sub Committee Review, the role and reporting lines for the Competitions Sub Committee will change. From the 2015 AGM the Competitions Sub Committee will report to the CGB and be responsible for competition development. Competition management will remain the responsibility of Governance.
- iii. The Terms of Reference for Governance and the Laws Sub Committee are currently being reviewed.
- iv. Governance has received updates on the Financial Integrity Project being undertaken by the Legal Department. Proposals will be presented to Governance, the Board and Council in due course.
- v. The RFU disciplinary Department has dealt with 147 cases including the Premiership (20), the Championship (22), National Leagues (68), other leagues (23), anti-doping (4) and other (10).

15. World Rugby Report

(Bill Beaumont & John Spencer - World Rugby representatives)

- i. **Rugby & EXCO Committees**
 - a. **Concussion:** With work well underway on the recognition and treatment of concussion the focus will now be expanded to include research into prevention.
 - b. **Hawkeye:** The Rugby Committee agreed to the trialling of Hawkeye. This will enable match officials to simultaneously look at multiple angles of the same incident.

- c. **Broadcast Protocol:** A stadium broadcast protocol is being developed, which will guide broadcasters as to what can and cannot be displayed on stadium screens including the number of times a replay can be shown.
 - d. **Laws Representation Group:** The LRG will meet at the end of April to discuss Law changes proposed by the Unions as part of the new four year Laws review cycle. Rob Andrew is the RFU's representative and Rachael Burford is representing the World Rugby Athletes' Commission.
 - e. **Run off areas:** World Rugby has asked that where practicable all pitches should have a five metre run off area.
 - f. **Junior World Championship 2017:** The Rugby Committee is recommending to the World Rugby Council that Georgia host the 2017 JWC.
 - g. **Global development:** World Rugby is increasing its budget for global participation with the objective of increasing the number of players from 7.2m to 8.0m over the next 18 months.
 - h. **Women's Rugby:** World Rugby is looking to create a world ranking table for the women's game.
 - i. **7s International Caps:** Caps will be awarded for each qualifying tournament played and not for each game played.
 - j. **World Rankings:** World Rugby is looking to change the way it decides world rankings. A report will be submitted to the next Rugby Committee meeting.
 - k. **7s Rugby World Cup 2017:** Cardiff and San Francisco are the candidates to host the 7s Rugby World Cup in 2017. The decision will be made at the May meeting of the World Rugby Council.
 - l. **Renaming of Regional Associations:** EXCO agreed that the Federation of Oceania Rugby Unions (FORU) could change their name to Oceania Rugby and that the Asian Rugby Football Union (ARFU) could change its name to Asia Rugby
 - m. **Strategic Plan:** World Rugby has decided to rewrite its strategic plan as the current plan is deemed to be too long, unfocussed and not user friendly.
 - n. **Governance Review:** As part of the governance review a set of revised Bye-Laws has been circulated to Unions for comments.
- ii. **Regulations Committee**
- a. **Players Seeking Asylum:** Following the case of two Ugandan players who claimed asylum in the UK following the Commonwealth Games, World Rugby has stated that a player should be permitted to play in the Country of the asylum request.
 - b. **Olympic Eligibility:** World Rugby has become concerned about the rushed nature of some applications to change a player's country of eligibility before Olympic qualifying competitions. In future twenty days' notice of such an application will have to be given.
 - c. **Release of Players for RWC:** Some countries are having difficulty in obtaining the release of players for RWC preparation.
 - d. **Under Age Sanctions Table:** The new youth sanctions table should be adopted at the May meeting of the World Rugby Council.
 - e. **Constitutional Review:** The Regulations Committee endorsed the introduction of Independent Non Executives onto EXCO and the Nominations Committee.
 - f. **Incorporation:** Discussions are taking place about whether World Rugby should be incorporated; a review is likely.
 - g. **Player Eligibility:** The question of player eligibility was discussed, but there appears to be little appetite for a review at this time.

The next Council meeting is on 12 June 2015.

AGE GRADE COMPETITION REVIEW

Approved Principles

1.	Mixed contact rugby will finish after Under 11s.
2.	Under 13s dual age band for girls will not include Under 11s.
3.	Fifteen-a-side rugby will start at Under 14.
4.	New Rules of Play for Under 13s will be implemented in the 2016/17 season.
5.	The introduction of the lineout commences in the Under 14s.
6.	There will be a nationally defined menu of national and county competitions per age group.
7.	There will be no formal league rugby before Under 13s.
8.	There will be no tournaments (competitions that find an overall winner) below Under 12s.
9.	All competitions and representative rugby (local to CB to national) will be played in specific nationally consistent windows during the season.
10.	Regional Player Development Groups will be formed to drive the player pathway programme.
11.	From the 2015/16 season the divisional representative level will be replaced by a regional level programme at Under 16s.
12.	There will be no representative rugby below Under 15s.
13.	There will be no district programmes at Under 16s.

APPENDIX 2

COMPENSATION ADVISORY PANEL

Terms of Reference

1.	To recommend to the RFU Council policies relating the financial for those Council members who hold qualifying positions within the Union.
2.	To recommend to Council the maximum annual compensation that may be claimed by Council members (or their employers).
3.	To recommend to Council the procedures by which Council members (or their employers) may claim compensation.
4.	To approve the claims for compensation.
5.	To ensure that the procedures approved by Council are followed and to conduct a review of monies claimed by Council members to verify that claims are in accordance with the procedures and policies approved by Council.
6.	To pass on any evidence of abuse of process in the claiming of compensation by Council members to the Head of the Legal Department for investigation.

TRAVEL FUNDING FOR OFFSHORE CLUBS

Principles	
1.	The RFU will make contributions towards the travel costs for teams that are involved with offshore fixtures in RFU Adult Fifteen-a-side competitions at Level 3 and below.
2.	The annual financial support will be limited to a maximum sum of £350K FOR 2016/17 (reviewed annually by CGB) for RFU league and cup competitions.
3.	Priority will be given to ensuring that mainland Clubs are not financially disadvantaged.
4.	The teams are (with 2014/15 league in brackets):
	Guernsey Men (National 3 London)
	Guernsey Women (National Challenge South East South 2)
	Jersey Women (National Challenge South East South 1)
	Douglas Men (South Lancs/Cheshire 1)
	Ramsey Men (South Lancs/Cheshire 3)
	Vagabonds Men (South Lancs/Cheshire 2)
	Vagabonds Women (National Challenge ½ West)
	Isle of Wight Men (Snows Group Hampshire 1)
	Sandown & Shanklin Men (London 3 South West)
	Ventnor Men (Snows Group Hampshire 2)
Policies	
1.	Funding will be provide for a maximum of 19 passengers (20 for Clubs at Levels 3 & 4)
2.	The cost for mainland teams will be guaranteed at 100% with the remainder of funding distributed across the off-shore teams.
3.	In RFU cup competitions at Level 5 & 6 where matches may be played in pools of 3 followed by a knock out stage, one of the pool matches will be played off-shore with two one the mainland. At Level 5 this will be capped for off-shore Clubs at a total of £8k per Club for the whole campaign. For Clubs at Level 6 and below all matches will be played on the mainland and funding will be provided to off-shore Clubs for one match with all other travel at the Clubs' cost.
4.	The default position is that England Rugby Travel (ERT) will arrange flights on behalf of the RFU unless there is a more competitive alternative.
5.	The use of a charter airline will also be considered and agreed if it fits within the policy/budget
6.	Contributions of £17 per person will be made to teams playing in RFU leagues that play matches with Isle of Wight teams.

COMMUNITY GAME BOARD

Priorities

CLUB DEVELOPMENT SUB COMMITTEE

- Develop a vision for Local Rugby Leadership
- Agree implementation of PFR - next steps
- Agree further development of CB roles and responsibilities
- Produce minimum ground standards
- Develop a financial integrity paper

GAME DEVELOPMENT SUB COMMITTEE

- Serious and catastrophic injuries in the tackle - production of improved learning material for coaches
- Match official blueprint review
- Launch of 3 online concussion awareness modules
- Monitoring of women's attendance at coaches and match officials courses

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT SUB COMMITTEE

- Academy Under 18s playing programme analysis
- Develop men's 7's pilot schemes and future 7's strategy
- Women's and girls' 7's development in 4 selected universities
- Review England Counties XV's spring programme

EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT SUB COMMITTEE

- 16-24 year old player recruitment and retention
- Integration of educational institutions and clubs/CBs
- RWC 2015 lead up and legacy
- Building on the Education Landscape Conference

OTHER WORK

- Payment of players
- National Student's League
- Age grade representative rugby and player development funding
- International ticket allocation to community clubs
- Adult Competition Review (ACR) implementation
- World Cup activation plans
- Business planning