



## OXFORDSHIRE RUGBY UNION

### MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING Tuesday 14th Dec 2021 via Zoom

**Present:** Pete Bramley, Andy Tacon, Gina Overton, Doug Humphries, Rob Walsh, Stuart Mount, Chris White, Dave Walkden, Jane & Paul Weaver, Doug & Jenny Bosley

**Apologies:** Jamie Metcalfe -Tarren

1a **Minutes of 26<sup>th</sup> Oct:** Approved with no amendments required and no matters arising outside of this agenda. Proposed by Jane W, Seconded by Rob W

#### 2. Chairman's Report

**Success Planning Matrix** had been circulated. **Action:** PB and GO to meet to clarify links to Strategic Plan and Sponsorship package information.

#### **Feedback on SW CBs meeting with RFU reps Steve Grainger and Bill Sweeney:**

We are all facing a similar situation with problems with grass roots rugby yet successful growth of W&G rugby; concerns about DPPs with 'rejected' players leaving the game; Game On principles are being explored with possible law changes in Lower leagues which may cause confusion. The RFU could get 'officers' more involved in schools.

In Summary following Covid: a) fewer players & player availability; b) less income/funding for facility development; c) fewer volunteers; d) fewer referees.

#### 3a. Treasurer's Report (AT circulated latest accounts)

a) RFU funding down 70% from £42k to £12.8k though Youth allocation up from £12k to £21k. The Tribute £2k sponsorship has been received.

b) Expenditure is well down with a volunteer Hon Sec and CB meetings in clubs, not hotels.

c) We still have 5 x £400 grants to give to clubs who take up the RFU's Risk Assessment.

**Action** PB to chase up Clubs & Board Chat via WhatsApp and DH to club officers via GMS

#### 3b. Sponsorship Package

a) Congratulations and many thanks to Gina for putting this document together

**Action** CW to present to David Hart of Kubota for £25k p.a. for 4 years.

b) AT expressed concern about them being offered Patron membership for International tickets as this would put them 'in the hat' for tickets rather than giving them the usual first option. Our ticket allocation should allow us to do this. **Action** GO to amend as necessary.

c) This package could then be tailored to suit other sponsors. CW has a few smaller ones lined up who are retailers of Kubota and their logo could go on shorts and/or Refs' shirts.

d) No headway with sponsors' boards at the AGP at Quins **Action** PB to see them in Jan 22.

e) We need to go with one supplier for all County teams' kit. Doug B is to **Action** this and may also get a % discount equating to £6 off per shirt for quality CCC products.

Sponsorship package proposed as acceptable by Dave W, seconded by Rob W. All in favour.

#### 4. Secretary's Report (DH)

##### Correspondence

- a) DH has sent a Facilities Audit to all Clubs at the request of Jason Bowers to ascertain current needs and priorities **Action** DH to contact JB asking for a summary of outcomes.
- b) The new RFU Risk Assessment Manager suggests that the 3 or 4 current users share their experience with neighbouring clubs to generate interest. Time is now running out.
- c) CB Management structure circulated. **Action** Inform DH of any additions or amendments

#### 5. RFU Council Rep Report (RW)

- a) A Zoom meeting was held with GAB about their concerns over W&G Age bands. **Action** We will return to this in 3 months to see what progress has been made
- b) Ronald MacDonald from Quins has agreed to join our Disciplinary panel.
- c) RW can take 2 guests to 2 of the 6 Nations games at Twickenham including lunch and a mini tour. Various names suggested: Martin Moran,(Didcot) John Brodley,(Oxford) Ron (Banbury) Priority for long serving members and Age Grade coaches as this group needs a moral booster. **Action** email Rob names of those worthy for consideration asap.
- d) We may have some 'surplus' international tickets to support Wallingford's cut back.

#### 6. Women & Girls Rugby (CW)

- a) All is going well with matches at Banbury, Chinnor, Henley, Didcot and Faringdon and recruitment is steadily increasing.
- b) Clusters are working well where clubs do not have enough girls for 1 team.
- c) Didcot v Banbury cup game went ahead without a qualified ref. Now Didcot want it counted as a friendly with a rematch with a qualified Ref. **Action** PB -can we get a qualified Ref in for this game?
- d) GAB have launched a big social media recruitment campaign and other clubs feel that they may lose players to GAB.
- e) Age Grade bandings next year to cover 2 age groups eg. u/13 & u/14 in 1 band. Based on size, players can go up or down a band. Clubs may need more coaches for these age bands.
- f) W&G rugby is now being taken more seriously since O2 sponsored W&G rugby rather than Touch rugby. ORFU are considered at the top of the game by Southern Counties.

#### 7. Age Grade Rugby (DW circulated his report)

- a) DW is worried about the state of Age Grade rugby especially at 14+ due to Glouc and Wasps DPP involvement and classifying their matches as county games when ORFU coaches are not involved. They are producing a poor standard having had 'no contact' training due to having no physio, and Glouc not able to provide 15 players for an East Oxon v West Oxon match. They say no culling but U/15s cut from 43 to 25. **Action** Can we afford to pay for a physio to support these DPP age groups?
- b) Now losing players to neighbouring DPPs with Chinnor U/16s and U/15s losing 10 players each to Bucks/Wasps DPP.
- c) CBs and schools have little influence on the DPP. Kevin Robinson argues with the DPPs but no consequences due to their lack of actions.
- d) Our own coaches are discouraged by this and are leaving
- e) DPPs do not affect U/17s, U/18s & U/20s where we can only offer places in the SW team, but we need to boost the Age Grade system to ensure these players continue into Senior rugby.
- f) Should we just have 1 DPP (Wasps)? Two DPPs means more boys can be involved.

g) There have been a number of cancelled games, but now most Clubs have only 1 team per age group

**Action:** RW suggests that the following meet (Zoom?) in Jan to formulate possible ways forward:- RW, DW, DB, PB and Kevin R. **Suggested date: Tues 11<sup>th</sup> Jan** now that the full CB meeting has moved to the following Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> January

h) CW – will the girls face the same problems in the future if/when they have DPPs?

## 8. Competitions

a) **Game On principles (JB)** Our DOC discussed adopting these principles and decided that they should only apply to Level 9 leagues and below – BBO 2 (N & S) and below. JB proposed that we accept this; DB seconded – passed with no objections. 2 of the 3 BBO CBs need to agree for this to happen. **Action** JB to feedback our decision to our DOC.

b) Wheatley 2nds and Grove 3rds have been expunged from their leagues. They can reapply next season, but need to play at least 10 friendlies to show they can raise a side.

c) The Targetted Funded **Refs Training course** will take place on 15<sup>th</sup> January facilitated by Dave Larham. There are still some places left. The Refs Soc could recruit some for this. **PB**

d) **Vets Floodlit competition** Will this go ahead this season as some clubs were asking about this on the BBO WhatsApp group? Many clubs have a Vets team but with no fixtures, so are they waiting for this? Could they field a team anyway? Rob Heggars from Henley normally organises this, so see if he is willing to do this.

## 9. Safeguarding & Discipline (JB)

a) Safeguarding – no issues

b) Discipline – a few red cards issued – often associated with contact to the head. Frequently Yellow cards are issued for Red Card offences.

## 10. Representative Rugby (DB circulated a report)

a) The U/20s fixtures are now in January, not April. Marin Moran has stood down as Coach, so with no coach and no time to get a quad together following the Covid ‘break’ it was agreed to defer entry to this competition until next season **Action** DB to inform the RFU. Offers are coming in for a replacement coach.

b) Women’s Competition (CW) the proposed fixtures are being reviewed due to travelling distances e.g. Oxon to Cumbria

c) Application of teams to Lower Leagues. DB thinks that there will be no unusual requests from our Clubs and that the status quo will remain.

## 11. Volunteers Recognition Update (GO circulated the Honda Awards doc)

a) The Honda Awards have just been announced – similar to the Mitsubishi awards with a £1000 donation from the RFU to support events.

b) GO will plan an Awards ceremony for the end of the season, Covid permitting. We already have a number of awards/prizes in store.

**Action** GO to ask Clubs to nominate volunteers in January for the April/May award event

## AOB

a) Harwell will contribute 50% towards their own Defib. Bicester have a portable one.

b) RW- thanks those who participated in the Presidents Walk. We raised over £2k

c) Bicester’s barrister has studied our Rules. RW to share outcomes with AT next Tuesday.

d) GO – Quins are concerned about our lack of Social Media coverage for them, yet we promote the OURFC v England U/20s match. **Action** GO to ask them to forward items to her for our Social Media platforms.

e) GO and SM have been accepted onto the RFU Leadership course.

f) Teams of the Month: Sept – Quins 1<sup>st</sup> XV; Oct – Chinnor 3<sup>rd</sup> XV; Nov- Harwell

g) **Vevo Video platforms:** for recording and analysing games plus future live streaming  
Teams at Level 6 and higher already have their own video equipment.

The CB does not have enough games alone to warrant this.

The management of this requires time, organisation etc when volunteers are in short supply.

This is a good option but not viable at this time. We will reconsider at the end of next season, 2022/23

Meeting finished at 21.05

Next meeting is on Tues 18<sup>th</sup> Jan via Zoom

**Not the original date of Tues 11 Jan** which can be used for the Age Grade/DPP group meeting.