



**Minutes of the CLUBS' MEETING**  
Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at Trojans FC

**Present:**

HRFU President	Ed Neville*
Finance Chairman	Richard Showan*
Board Chair	Gary Self*
Game Development Chair	Rob Matthews*
Clubs Representative – Club Development	Wayne Hausen*
Clubs Representative – Game Development	Nick Whittle*
Hampshire RFU Representative	Terry Burwell*
RFU Club Developer	Alex Roe
Admin Officer	Georgia Leprohon

**Clubs Represented**

Alton*	Gosport & Fareham*
Basingstoke	Havant
Eastleigh	Portsmouth*
Fareham*	Tottonians
Fordingbridge*	Trojans*
Gosport & Fareham*	

**Clubs and attendees represented by Proxy vote**

Aldershot & Fleet\*  
Eastleigh\*  
Ellingham & Ringwood\*  
Fawley\*  
Guernsey\*  
Havant\*  
Isle of Wight\*  
Jersey\*  
New Milton\*  
Sandown & Shanklin\*  
Southampton\*  
Tottonians\*

\* 28 Voting Members  
(Quorum = 15)

**Club Representatives**

Andrew Godden	Ian White	Stefan Hargrave
Claire Middleton	Janes Whitefield	Steve Appleby
Colin Richardson	Malcolm Osborne	Steve Jenkins
Greg Beecham	Marc Ramsdale	Tim Dance
Ian Brown	Mark Jones	

EN opened the meeting at 19.20

EN introduced the Clubs Representatives on the Board

Wayne Hausen – [waynehausen@aol.com](mailto:waynehausen@aol.com)

Nick Whittle - [nwhittle@bell-integration.com](mailto:nwhittle@bell-integration.com)

The items below are 3 of the 5 main focuses of the RFU for this season.

Attached is a PowerPoint presentation from AR our RFU Club Developer - relating to the headings below



Club Developer  
Report - Hampshire

## **Retention in the adult male game / How do we stop the decline in Hampshire – TB/AR**

The last 12 months have been challenging, with the issue of new tackle heights and game completions. There has been an increase in game completion and it would appear the game is now recovering from Covid restrictions. The challenge with the lower leagues is rugby supply and player demand. Within Hampshire leagues 4 & 5 are running at 80% completion, with the national average being 79%. Last year the national average was 50%.

Generally speaking, clubs are refilling dates and more rugby is being played. Going forward the player base is strong but players are not always available every week. Teams need between 45-50 players to run one team, 55-60 for 2. This can sometimes pose a challenge with volunteers.

There has been more collaboration between clubs to complete fixtures, change venues, with bad weather using neutral grounds. The lower leagues have been a great success due to the work from the competitions committee.

In the last 2 seasons AR has worked with several clubs who have struggled, this included 1-2-1 support, access to further support and interventions.

There was a discussion about different ways of promoting rugby, GameOn, sharing best practice, combining with other clubs to ensure games are played and the use of social media such as WhatsApp.

Millbrook were highlighted for only charging players social membership rather than playing membership, which has improved their player bases.

Last year saw the affiliation of Youth players on GMS. Due to tackle height introduction, this has been pushed to next season for adult players. There is currently discussion at the RFU concerning dual registration for Counties 1 and below. TB is fighting against this. He feels that for the lower 15 it would provide mobility and fluidity but it would not be beneficial for Counties 1 or 2 as these clubs would probably be looking to make regional leagues.

The affiliation would be player lead, with clubs then approving. This led to a discussion about player registration, the strain on volunteers. It was felt that the technology should be app based, which is currently not ready, so will be web based. WH mentioned trying to have a registration day at clubs should could hope manage this. Under Data Protection laws, players would have ownership of the data. AR advised there was a webinar about adult registration in October.

Clubs should contact AR / TB or CB if they have any concerns

Alex Roe – RFU Club Developer - [alexanderroe@rfu.com](mailto:alexanderroe@rfu.com)

Terry Burwell – Hampshire RFU Council Representative - [terryburwell@gmail.com](mailto:terryburwell@gmail.com)

Chris Budden – Hampshire RFU Competitions Chair - [buddenhampshire@gmail.com](mailto:buddenhampshire@gmail.com)

## **Pathways from Academy to Seniors – Increasing numbers of those transitioning – TB/AR**

Current data on GMS suggests that youth registration is running at 160,000, down from last year, in particular within the U16-18 bracket.

Research has shown that within Generation Z, rugby is not in the top 20 sports they wish to engage in. This will impact students and adults.

JW from Fareham asked about more support in schools, the loss of the CRCs and RDOs is still felt across the county, especially their links and work with schools.

There was a discussion about the study and impacts for modern life. Youngest consume and engage with sport through screens rather than participating. There are now more choices, with a wider variety of sports to choose from. Covid has played its part in the challenge as well as the impact of academic challenge in this age group. It was pointed out that this is not a new problem.

AR ran a transition workshop in Sussex last summer, he will discuss with Hampshire RFU to run one in Hampshire

Luke Wilson – School Chair - luke.wilson@oasismayfield.org

## **Participation for girl's junior rugby – Drive participation across 12-18 – TB/AR**

The RFU have launched a new program “Love Rugby”, promoting rugby for 9–18-year-old girls.

Hampshire RFU is hoping to run a festival in April 2024.

Inner Warrior camps – registration is open till 6<sup>th</sup> December for January camps. There will also be an Inner Warrior series, this is the build up to the Women's 2025 Rugby World Cup.

There are resources available from the RFU.

Many clubs have already benefitted from RFU Impact funding 2025 (see slides)

Please continue to ensure the Hampshire RFU Facilities Audit is updated at your club so Kieran Spencer (RFU Facilities Lead Hampshire) and Hampshire Facilities Lead are aware of the current needs of your club.

## **Schools / Colleges / University and links with clubs to grow the game – Use of additional RFU funding -GS**

Hampshire RFU has successful bid from the RFU additional funding (Adult Male Recovery Fund – AMRF) to help create better links between colleges/Universities and armed forces.

There was a discussion about dual registration, deployment and students holiday breaks. Some clubs are already engaging with these groups and being flexible, providing a social environment that encourages players to return to be part of the rugby family.

A letter will be going out to clubs providing details so they can bid for funding. This will require clubs to come up with a plan to attract new players.

## **Impact of tackle height changes – Open discussion**

Despite many previous heated discussions about this topic, the feeling was that no great changes have been felt. The main issue was the original poor communication from the RFU.

The referees have been empathic and communication on the whole has been positive.

Clubs agreed that there has been no great impact on the game so far this season.

## **AOB**

Community Game of the Future – TB

Over the summer that was some virtual workshops about how the game will look like in the future. It is believed that only 18 clubs, 300 people engaged.

The first meeting will be 28<sup>th</sup> November.

The RFU is looking to move away from centralised delivery to local system.

TB mentioned that Hampshire clubs are self-reliant, which led to a discussion about clubs needing to become self-reliant due to the lack of support from the RFU and it was noted that the RDOs and CRCs are still much missed.

Due to the communication issues with the RFU, clubs no longer believe they will be listened to, which is causing a lack of engagement.

WH raised an issue causing a lack of home fixtures over 7 weeks, CB advised he will look into matrix.

IW mentioned that Gosport & Fareham will be holding a Rugby League event in the summer of 2024

EN thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Date of next meeting. Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at Trojans FC

Date of AGM Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at Southsea Nomads RFC

Meeting finished 21:00