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**MINUTE OF BRIEFING MEETING OF THE SCOTTISH RUGBY COUNCIL
HELD BY MICROSOFT TEAMS
AT 5.00PM ON MONDAY 15 MARCH 2021 AND ADJOURNED AND COMPLETED AT 5.15PM ON
WEDNESDAY 17 MARCH 2021**

Attendance on 15 March**Present:**

Ian Barr	(IB)	President
Colin Rigby	(CR)	Vice-President
Alistair Forsyth	(AB)	Borders Representative
Bobby Frazer	(BF)	National 3 Representative
Bob Richmond	(BR)	North Regional Representative
Eric Hugh	(EH)	National 2 Representative
Gavin Hastings	(GH)	Co-opted Representative (British and Irish Lions)
Gerry Tosh	(GTo)	National 1 Representative
Gordon Thomson	(GT)	Premiership Representative
Hazel Swankie	(HS)	Midlands Representative
Ian Rankin	(IR)	Co-opted Representative (Pro14)
Jim O'Neil	(JON)	Glasgow South Regional Representative
John Halliday	(JH)	Co-opted Representative (Rugby Europe)
Kenneth Knott	(KK)	Referees Representative
Malcolm Offord	(MO)	Scottish Exiles Representative
Murdo Gillanders	(MG)	Edinburgh Regional Representative
Rosy Hume	(RHu)	Women's Representative
Willie Gardner	(WG)	Glasgow North Regional Representative

Apologies:

Jonathan Anderson	(JA)	Schools Representative
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In Attendance:

[NAME REDACTED]	[XX]	Senior Solicitor & Council Secretary
John Jeffrey	(JJ)	Chairman of the Board
Jim Mallinder	(JM)	Director of High Performance
Mark Dodson	(MD)	Chief Executive Officer
[NAME REDACTED]	[XX]	[NAME OF FIRM REDACTED]
Robert Howat	(RHt)	General Counsel & Company Secretary
Sheila Begbie	(SB)	Director of Rugby Development

1. Introduction**ACTION**

The President noted a quorum was present and opened the Meeting at 5pm.

Apologies were received from the Schools Representative.

2. Strategy Update

The President welcomed the Chairman, Chief Executive, Director of Rugby Development, Director of High Performance, the Finance Consultant and the General Counsel & Company Secretary to the Meeting.

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The President noted that the Board Strategy day had taken place on 4 March and had been a positive and successful day. The strategy proposals that had been presented to the Board by the Chief Executive and his team had been discussed in detail and unanimously supported and the Chief Executive would now present those proposals to the Council for their feedback and comments.

A detailed presentation was delivered by the Chief Executive, the Director of Rugby Development, the Director of High Performance and the Scottish Exiles Representative (in his capacity as a member of the Board). The Chief Executive encouraged Council Members to ask questions and give feedback throughout his presentation.

The presentations addressed the following key pillars:

1. Proposals for the domestic game and the return to rugby;
2. Proposals for the professional game;
3. Revenue and brand considerations; and
4. Engagement with Scottish Rugby's people and key stakeholders.

Each topic was discussed at length and Council Members asked questions and provided feedback.

It was noted that the presentations delivered at the Meeting would be circulated to the Council members for them to consider the information, and to digest, before providing further feedback on the initial proposals.

The President thanked the guests for the information that had been provided to the Council.

Due to the length of time spent on this agenda item the Council Briefing Meeting was adjourned. The outstanding business would be dealt with by the Council in the forthcoming days.

The Meeting was adjourned at 8pm.

**MINUTE OF THE ADJOURNED BRIEFING MEETING OF THE SCOTTISH RUGBY COUNCIL
HELD BY MICROSOFT TEAMS
AT 5.15PM ON WEDNESDAY 17 MARCH 2021**

Present:

Ian Barr	(IB)	President
Colin Rigby	(CR)	Vice-President
Alistair Forsyth	(AB)	Borders Representative
Bobby Frazer	(BF)	National 3 Representative
Bob Richmond	(BR)	North Regional Representative
Eric Hugh	(EH)	National 2 Representative
Gerry Tosh	(GTo)	National 1 Representative

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Gordon Thomson	(GT)	Premiership Representative
Hazel Swankie	(HS)	Midlands Representative
Ian Rankin	(IR)	Co-opted Representative (Pro14)
Jim O'Neil	(JON)	Glasgow South Regional Representative
John Halliday	(JH)	Co-opted Representative (Rugby Europe)
Jonathon Anderson	(JA)	Schools Representative
Kenneth Knott	(KK)	Referees Representative
Malcolm Offord	(MO)	Scottish Exiles Representative
Murdo Gillanders	(MG)	Edinburgh Regional Representative
Willie Gardner	(WG)	Glasgow North Regional Representative

Apologies:

Gavin Hastings	(GH)	Co-opted Representative (British and Irish Lions)
Rosy Hume	(RH)	Women's Representative

In Attendance:

[NAME REDACTED]	(XX)	Senior Solicitor & Council Secretary
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1. Introduction**ACTION**

The President noted a quorum was present and opened the adjourned Council Briefing Meeting at 5.15pm.

Apologies were received from the Women's Representative and the British and Irish Lions Representative.

2. Strategy Proposal Update

It was noted that Council Members had been asked to provide their feedback on the strategy proposals by Friday 19th March.

A number of Council Members considered that this deadline did not allow sufficient time to consider the lengthy documentation provided and feedback accordingly and requested further time to do so.

The Glasgow South Representative noted that he would be reluctant for any more time to be given as it would potentially delay the publication of the strategy to the membership going forward. He noted it was important to communicate to the Clubs as soon as possible.

It was also noted that Council Members might need time to consider the responses to their feedback/questions before they were in a position to endorse the strategy proposals.

It was emphasised that, at this stage, Council members were being asked for feedback and comments as part of a consultation process and were not being asked to endorse, or otherwise, the proposals.

The President highlighted that the Board were comfortable with the strategy proposals, subject to consultation and feedback from the Council.

He reiterated the Chief Executive's comments that it was recognised that further detail would be required but the Board were looking to establish whether the Council were satisfied with the general direction of travel.

In light of the comments noted, it was agreed that further time for feedback should be allowed. The Council Secretary would discuss this with the President and would then confirm a revised deadline for feedback and comments.

3. **Rugby Development Update**

The President noted that he and the Vice-President would be meeting with the Rugby Development Department following the upcoming First Minister's announcement on the timetable for lifting Coronavirus lockdown restrictions. Thereafter, a briefing session would be organised for the Council.

The President referred to the Rugby Development Department's report which was taken as read. The key points of the report were as follows:

Progress with Reset, Recover and Rebuild:

- Workforce/volunteers and compliance
 - Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Services (VSDS) had informed Scottish Rugby of an update to their application process. Whilst the Safeguarding team waits to understand how that will affect processes, a halt has been put on new applications and CPOs had been informed. This was thought to have little effect as applications had recently been in low numbers due to current restrictions. It is hoped that the update would allow Scottish Rugby to create further efficiencies in processes.
 - The change to internal process had been highlighted in the previous Council report and had come into effect in January 2021. Now that applications are only accepted and forwarded onto VSDS once a coach has a SCRUMS registration number, coaching records should be even more accurate than previously.
 - **AYRTPR** - Since the announcement of the current period of lockdown, no new AYRTPR have been received or processed. Once matches started to be scheduled and full contact training was allowed, clubs would be reminded of the importance of applying for the necessary clearance.

Recover – Playing Opportunities

- The latest update from the Scottish Government had not included any reference to a return to contact sports. From the 15 March 2021, non-contact outdoor sport for young people under 17 could resume. This did allow clubs

to hold non-contact training sessions. Touch Rugby **CANNOT** be played as this is still regarded as a contact sport.

Rebuild – Grow, progress, sustain

- *Club Development Planning* - Ongoing club development advice and guidance to help clubs to deliver their Support to Club Investment Programme agreements had been provided via a series of update and review meetings. Over 130 clubs had attended these sessions which had been received positively.
- *Quality Environments in club* - A simple document had been prepared and shared with clubs that have an interest and current capacity to consider how they will improve their development environments. Support and ongoing input would be given to any clubs and development officers that express an interest immediately or in coming months.
- *Community/Collaborate* - Clubs had been providing a great breadth and depth of case studies illustrating the range of community engagement throughout rugby communities, and the diversity and inclusivity of clubs. The growing commitment from clubs to the promotion, advice and support being given in the area of Mental Health and Wellbeing was noted.

Achievements:

- Elite referees had continued to be heavily involved in international and professional rugby, with notable appointments for a number of Scottish Rugby referees.
- Regional good news stories had gained good traction on the Scottish Rugby website and had included reports on Stirling University Women and Edinburgh BATs.
- An all-staff business briefing was held on 25 February 2021 to update all Rugby Development staff with a Scottish Rugby business update.
- Regional webinars had been held in all 5 regions to support clubs and provide further information on the Supporting Clubs Investment Programme.
- A mental well-being e-learning module had been launched for clubs. This was created by the Training and Education department with content provided by Hampden Sports Clinic and the Scottish FA.
- The Club Hardship Fund 2 deadline has been extended indefinitely (with a deadline date to be identified when the situation becomes clearer) as many clubs had not yet undertaken the PAT testing and legionella water testing work that they had applied to have funding for, as a number of the clubs have not returned to their clubhouses. The agreement with HF had been extended to cover the new deadline.

Match Officials

Covid-19 Operations

Scottish Rugby officials continue to be well supported by colleagues in Medical, Operations, Health & Safety and Security as part of their involvement in matches both at home and abroad.

A number of Scottish Rugby officials are PCR testing twice a week in line with 6 Nations protocols and have continued to return negative tests.

All the officials involved in matches continued to show a high level of professionalism and respect towards the Covid-19 protocols and understand the importance of maintaining high standards to ensure rugby continues.

Progress & Performance

Elite referees have continued to be heavily involved in international and professional rugby over the last few weeks.

M Adamson became the first Scottish male official to referee a 6 Nations game in 19 years when he took charge of England vs. Italy on 13th February. M Adamson is also involved in every round of this year's 6 Nations with assistant refereeing appointments in 4 matches.

H Davidson has been appointed to two men's professional matches in EPCR and Pro14, but both were postponed. She will be reappointed to a Pro14 match before the end of the season and as part of her build up to the Women's 6 Nations. Looking ahead, H Davidson will be involved in upcoming World Rugby 7s competitions as preparations build towards the Olympics before being involved in RWC 2021 in New Zealand later this year.

B Blain was assistant referee for M Adamson in England vs. Italy. He has also refereed two more Pro14 matches recently. He will continue to referee Pro14, EPCR and Rainbow Cup matches in the coming months.

S Grove-White will referee two matches in the Pro14 in the coming weeks. He has recently been assistant referee in a number of matches and assisted in some national team training sessions. He will also be involved in the Pro14, EPCR and Rainbow Cup over the coming months.

The rest of the elite officials have been working hard in the background both mentally and physically, although on field opportunities have been severely limited due to lack of matches. A full post match review is undertaken with each team of match officials to continue to learn and improve.

There has been a big increase in the amount of positive publicity surrounding the match officials over the last few months. Both M Adamson and H Davidson have featured in several newspaper, online and podcast interviews to discuss their involvement in top level matches. This is a really important step forward for the match officials in continuing to raise the profile of the group and share their experiences.

Training & Education

Mental Wellbeing E-Learning Course

In conjunction with the Hampden Sports Clinic and the Scottish Football Association, a mental wellbeing e-learning course will go live soon. The course is aimed at supporting players, coaches, match officials and volunteers with a basic overview of mental health information, and practical ways to help each other. The course will be available free of charge and available on the Scottish Rugby website.

Regions

Caledonia North (CN)

The implementation of high quality, sustainable rugby development programmes continues to be central to the growth and improvement of rugby in the Caledonia North region. In recent months the regional focus has been anchored to Caledonia North cultures, values and behaviours, and the ability to consistently engage with all our clubs, communities and stakeholders in supporting them to navigate the challenges and changes the current environment presents.

PLAY – Engaging in physical activity @Home: In recognising the power of sport to engage people in physical activity, the RDD has worked with CN rugby clubs to provide solutions and opportunities for their communities to continue engaging with the game of rugby in 2021. For many across CN clubs and communities, home schooling and working from home is a reality. Clubs and their members have been supported to be examples of best practice across the communities they serve.

The CN Development Officer network continues to support not only their individual club environments but ALL our CN clubs and communities. To address the promotion of physical activity in the home school environment, the CN DO team have jointly developed and are running a series of 8-week blocks delivering an @Home 30min rugby / PE session every Wednesday morning. The sessions are broadcast on the CN facebook page for the benefit of the entire CN rugby community and the content made directly available to target schools' networks by each DO.

PEOPLE - Workforce Development: The CN Team continued their work in preparing our clubs and their volunteer workforce base for the **Rebuild Phase**. The CN Workforce Development Plan which is inclusive of localised plans continues to progress. This work has been augmented with a series of key engagements with our 7 Local Authorities to identify current CPD and volunteer development support. The CN DO network continues to engage with Active Schools and PE staff to digitally embed rugby as part of the current homeschooling PE curricula.

The CN DO Team are running 2 x 8-week Youth Leaders and Coaching Workshops aimed at providing young people in S4, S5 or S6 the opportunity to complete an Introduction to Coaching course and associated leadership development skills. This first of the two courses is currently underway with 30 candidates enrolled.

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CLUBS & COMMUNITIES – CN Community Sports Hub Alignment: As examples of good practice across their respective communities the CN Team has worked closely on two pilot projects with **SportAberdeen** and Live Life Aberdeenshire to strongly position rugby and CN clubs across Aberdeen City and the Shire as part of the roll-out of each local authority’s new Community Sports Hub projects.

10 clubs (Aberdeen Wanderers, Alford Rugby, Deeside RFC, Ellon Rugby, Garioch RFC, Huntly RFC, Fraserburgh RFC, Mackie FP RFC, Peterhead RFC and Turriff RFC) have been aligned with new Community Sports Hub Structures with all 10 clubs visible and present as strong parts of the CSH Leadership Structures.

COLLABORATE & INNOVATE - CN Embracing Digital Platforms: As part of the CN social media plan, the CN regional facebook page continues to support our ability to engage with our clubs and communities with an ever-expanding reach, now beyond 1100 members ... **#CN1500**. High-quality engagement with our clubs across as many platforms as possible remains a key part of our Regional Delivery Strategy.

Our CN Christmas Elf, Keep Your Skills Fresh and @Home Schools Rugby / PE classes have had significant impact and a wide reach. Unique and positive stories from clubs like Aberdeen Taexali and their “Pride of the Terraces” posts have been welcomed. Installments of the digital CN President’s Coffee Break and Regional Strategic, Women’s & Girls and Youth & Schools Advisory Groups have been delivered.

Caledonia Midlands

Club Engagement

Two club regional club meetings were hosted over Zoom in February and March, where the Regional Director gave clubs an overview of the Supporting Clubs Investment Programme (SCIP). The meeting was focussed on the **Rebuild** section of the SCIP, where the Director talked through the elements of **Rebuild** (Club Development Planning, Quality Environments and Community / Collaboration), promoting the expectation for clubs to start the process of working on these elements to support their progression and sustainability.

There have been some fantastic examples of quality work being delivered by clubs, despite the challenging circumstances. There has been some positive discussion at the meetings that focussed on how we can generate opportunities to share the case studies that will be submitted with the objective of sharing some good practice across the region. The output of these discussions was an agreement to explore the possibility of digitally sharing some case studies, supporting the promotion of selected studies. A follow up meeting will take place in May to share some elements of the good work that has been happening.

21 Clubs attended these meetings, and a further 5 clubs have had 1-2-1 conversations to discuss the programmes.

In lockdown, club activity has been limited, however we have still been ensuring clubs are up to date and have the support and information they need with regards to

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Scottish Government and Scottish Rugby guidelines and supporting where required. With that support comes ad hoc and reactive questions and engagement with volunteers in our clubs.

Development Officer network

Regular engagement with Development Officers has continued in the region, with monthly meetings, and those Development Officers who are furloughed having been invited to attend voluntarily. These meetings have been a positive opportunity to connect as a team and check in on each other. At each meeting, two Development Officers are invited to share “what is going on in their community” and the topics that have been part of that discussion have included, but were not limited to:

- A share and overview of work from a DO which has gone into a club development planning project within their club.
- Sharing and promotion of mental health and wellbeing work that has been promoted through the club.
- A project run by a DO in a school in a SIMD area that targeted work with pupils who were disengaged in their rugby curricular classes. Specific programmes were put together for these pupils, which included some softer engagement and light 1-2-1 questionnaires. The result of this work has been transformational in their attainment and re-engagement.
- An update on how the use of technology and innovative programmes has helped keep pupils at a School of Rugby engaged whilst the schools have been closed.

As well as monthly meetings, there has been regular 1-2-1 support with DOs who are still working either part time, or full time, as well as DOs who are on furlough. We have been supporting the working DOs with some case study development and have set them a target of completing one quality case study for their club and community this year.

East

Work has now begun at Stoneyhill to upgrade changing facilities and build a new strength and conditioning suite at the home of Musselburgh RFC. The project has been supported by **sportscotland**, East Lothian Council and Scottish Rugby’s Club Sustainability Fund Capital Award from season 2019/20. Work is expected to be completed by August this year. The club also recently celebrated their centenary year and held an online celebration with members past and present to mark the occasion. Wester Hailes Education Centre (WHEC) in the west of Edinburgh is constructing a brand-new synthetic sports pitch to the rear of the school and will offer the opportunity for a local rugby club to partner with the school and use the site for their rugby programmes.

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Applications for anchor club status closed on 28 February with several rugby clubs declaring an interest in the site. The new full-sized World Rugby compliant 3G pitch is expected to be fully installed by early April and will be operational later that month. We will be working closely with the City of Edinburgh Council to support the selection process which will see at least one rugby club in the city moving their rugby operations to the school.

A contractor has now been appointed to carry out the drainage work at Roseburn Park, home to Murrayfield Wanderers FC, with work expected to begin in late March. The 30-week build programme will see the majority of the works completed during the first 2 months as new drainage systems are put in place across the playing fields. This project has been supported by Scottish Rugby as part of Project Eden and Edinburgh Rugby's new stadium build.

At the end of 2020, Edinburgh based rugby club, Lismore RFC, launched their rebranded youth programme, now known as the Edinburgh Harlequins. The programme is funded by a range of community partners including CashBack for Communities.

The Harlequins programme has been designed to create increased opportunities for young players from S1 through S6 based in south-east Edinburgh to engage in the sport by providing a centralised hub for young people from five local high schools – Castlebrae, Gracemount, Holyrood, Liberton and Portobello – where they can take part in regular training activity and games led by qualified coaches, teachers and volunteers.

Although current restrictions do not allow for group training to take place, Lismore RFC Development Officer has been working hard to develop new ways to support players within the programme, keep them engaged and provide positive physical and mental wellbeing experiences.

With support from the programme's three Community Coaches, including Scotland Women's international player L Thomson, the Lismore RFC Development Officer has been delivering tailored one-to-one sessions which explore fitness, specialist positioning coaching and other individual drills to support player development.

Clubs across the region have been supported through this season's *Supporting Clubs Investment Programme*, where 55 individuals from 47 clubs recently joined Regional Director on a webinar in the middle of February to discuss the requirements to meet the criteria for investment. We will continue to support clubs with club development planning and case study sharing on a 1-2-1 basis as we near the deadline of the end of April for all club submissions.

A special mention should be given on the work of Kelso RFC and Selkirk RFC who are leading the way on their support to members with their mental wellbeing programmes. Kelso have partnered with NHS Borders to offer members support through their Breathing Space programme whilst Selkirk have created the role of Mental Health Officer at the club, a position filled by their local rugby-playing GP.

Glasgow North

Since the festive break, significant time has been dedicated to re-engaging with clubs and supporting their engagement with the Supporting Clubs Investment Programme, in particular the themes contained within the Rebuild section. This culminated in a series of club forum meetings in mid- to late-February which provided continuity from meetings held in November in; Argyll & Bute and the Dunbartonshires, Glasgow City and East Renfrewshire, and the Lanarkshires.

These sessions supported an update on the topics of SCIP and Mental Wellbeing while also providing an open forum for clubs to discuss current challenges, raise any questions and offer support to one another. Conversation focussed largely on the structure of competition as rugby returns, with particular concern expressed around the 18-20 age bracket, while there was also good discussion around capturing the value of the good practice cases study submissions and presenting these back to clubs. This was seen as of paramount importance, allied to the ongoing support of clubs, both financially and through meetings such as these. These sessions remain of huge value and will continue on a quarterly basis in collaboration with Council Representative Willie Gardner.

The support of the Development Officer network remains a priority with fortnightly meetings focussing most recently on preparing our environments as best as possible for the return of activity. Despite the dearth of activity taking place, there is good energy being displayed around what might be possible, within individual clubs and schools and across local and regional communities. This is manifest in supporting coaches, parents and teachers to ensure the workforce is energised and supported while also considering what format of activity will be most appropriate to maximise the return of individuals to the game.

Following recent engagement with Scottish Student Sport (SSS) around their next strategy, there has been a renewed emphasis on the area of student rugby, leading to very positive conversations with SSS senior leadership and good engagement between our respective regional structures. Conversations to date have centred around using the induction of new student rugby club committees in April/May to re-emphasise Scottish Rugby's support of student rugby and highlight the culture, values and behaviours that are central to that support. The long-term potential of closer collaboration with SSS and institutions across Scotland has been sketched out but the immediate priority remains building robust relationships to support those ambitions of quality environments/positive destinations, player retention and transition, improved access to playing opportunities and workforce development.

Glasgow South

Supporting Clubs Investment Programme – Club Webinar

The Regional Director hosted a webinar on Thursday 11 February 2021 to talk clubs through what was required to obtain the **Rebuild** section of the investment.

There were 26 attendees from 15 clubs and initial feedback has been positive with clubs actively engaging with the Regional Director on their planned approach for the areas they will work on within this section.

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All attendees were sent a copy of resources in the follow up email and the webinar has been recorded and edited to support clubs who couldn't attend the live webinar. The Regional Director will continue to support clubs through this as we move into March and contact those clubs who didn't attend the webinar to ensure they have all of the relevant information.

Development Officer Network

The Regional Team continue to plan, and host fortnightly catch up meetings with the Development Officer Network. All Development Officers are invited to attend with the majority of individuals engaging, furlough dependent. This has been a great platform to share good practice, despite no rugby currently being played and it encourages positive conversations between clubs. It also gives the Regional Team an opportunity to share key messages and gain collective feedback from the network.

One of these sessions was used to run a short training session on creating quality video content along with social media posts and general club marketing. This was well received by all.

Club activity remains quiet, due to the current restrictions, but individuals continue to enjoy this engagement and it has enhanced the relationship between Development Officers and the Regional Team.

Club Support

Club support remains a key focus for the Glasgow South Team in 2021. Despite the lack of on field activity, clubs are still looking for off field support.

Support has ranged from partnership support with key school or local authority contacts, to bespoke media support with potential issues emerging from clubs. A considerable amount of time has been devoted to club partnership agreements and ongoing Development Officer furlough as well as external funding opportunities for clubs to access.

Concussion Awareness Workshop – CashBack Schools of Rugby

The Concussion Awareness workshop was delivered to all CashBack Schools of Rugby in the West and facilitated by the Partnerships and Projects Officer. The workshop was offered to players and coaches as an opportunity to raise awareness and knowledge of the risks surrounding concussion and the policies in place to protect players. Specific elements around recognition of symptoms with key examples of areas of the game to pay particular attention to were discussed.

Alongside this we stressed the importance of removal from the game: *'If in Doubt Sit Them Out'* due to the potential of a second impact. Through discussion we highlighted the *Graduated Return to Play* model, discussing the benefits and requirements for appropriate monitoring at each stage of the process.

All attendees were challenged to revisit their school programmes policies/processes around concussion and identify areas to improve on, including but not limited to;

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education for players/coaches on concussion, communication between teachers/coaches/parents when a concussion has occurred and identifying ways to share and enforce the GRTP process.

The workshop proved valuable to all attendees and is one we will look to offer again for the CashBack community next season

4. Governance Update

4.1 Update on the work of the Council's Standing Committee on Governance (SCOG)

The President confirmed that SCOG was continuing with its work on the governance review.

SCOG were awaiting a formal legal opinion from senior counsel as to a number of issues relating to the Trust (which holds the shares in Scottish Rugby Union Limited).

Once this opinion has been produced, the President noted that it would enable the members of SCOG to crystallise their views as to the possible governance changes that are under consideration at the present time.

The Vice-President had reported to SCOG on the work of the Decision-Making Matrix and Code of Conduct Working Party which would be covered under Agenda item 4.4.

4.2 Discussion regarding the Scottish Rugby Trust

The President noted that as part of SCOG's deliberations, it had been noted that the Trust currently only had two Trustees (there had traditionally been four Trustees at any one time in the past).

The National 3 Representative, and member of SCOG, noted that after lengthy discussion SCOG believed the Trust was currently underrepresented and the outcome of the governance review may have significant impact on the Trust. He noted that in order to provide sufficient cover, SCOG were of the view that the Trust should be strengthened by at least two Trustees in the interim period. He emphasised that the future of the Trust was still to be decided and was predicated by the senior counsel opinion which had been sought.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- The Scottish Exiles Representative suggested that as the senior elected positions of Scottish Rugby, the President and Vice-President should assume the positions of Trustees pending the outcome of the governance review.
- Council Members were of the opinion it was preferable to have an odd number of Trustees to aid in decision making should a vote ever be required.
- The Rugby Europe Representative suggested that when selecting the Trustees, the Council should also consider diversity in the appointments. The President reiterated this point and suggested the Midlands Representative was also added as a Trustee.

- In response to a question, the Council Secretary raised that traditionally Past Presidents had been appointed as Trustees and it should be noted that Council Members, Directors of the Board and Trustees were all individual positions which held different (and potentially conflicting) responsibilities and legal obligations which should be kept in mind.

After consideration and further discussion, it was **AGREED** that the President, Vice-President and Midlands Representative should be assumed as Trustees on an interim basis, pending the outcome of the governance review.

The Council Secretary confirmed she would prepare the necessary documentation for the assumption of Trustees.

AMc

4.3 *Update on Vice President's Board and Council notes*

The Vice-President thanked the Council Members and their Clubs for the positive feedback on the Vice President Notes.

He noted that bringing greater openness and transparency to the discussions of the Council, and the context behind those decisions, had formed part of his manifesto for election and he believed that the Vice-President Notes had done that.

He highlighted that at AGM 2 the Members had passed a resolution which related, among other things, to the publication of formal Council and Board meeting minutes. That approach had been in place for a number of months.

The Vice-President noted that whilst the publication of the formal Minutes was welcomed by the Clubs, the Council now needed to find a method of providing context to the relevant stakeholders.

(a) Board Note

The Vice-President noted that the Council were in a privileged position of receiving confidential company information, which was for Council consumption only.

As a result of internal conversations, it had been agreed that the Vice President would add a confidential cover note for the Council members to the Board Redacted Minutes so as to provide the Council members with additional context and insight around the discussions that had taken place.

The Council Members would also have access to certain papers that are of particular interest to the Council, i.e. the Rugby Development Report and a report from the Company Secretary Report as part of their Council papers. The Vice-President noted that this would continue to provide insight to the Council on Board matters.

The Vice-President highlighted that the new reporting scheme was an evolving process and any feedback from the Council Members and their Clubs was welcome in helping shape these reports going forward.

(b) Council Note

The Vice-President referred to the Note of Council Meeting which Members distributed to their Clubs.

The Vice-President confirmed that he and the Council Secretary had been working on how best to combine the Vice-President Note and Council Minutes without losing the context that the Vice-President Note provided.

The Vice-President confirmed that as of this Meeting, the Vice-President and Council Secretary would be creating one document that served the dual purpose of the formal Minutes and the Vice-President Note. He emphasised that this would also be an evolving process and again welcomed feedback from Council Members and their Clubs.

The Vice-President noted that he (with the consent of the President) reserved the right to revert back to separate documents if the combined document was not serving the interest of the stakeholders. He noted that he hoped through feedback from the Council and the members that one document could be used to fulfil the purpose.

The Council were supportive of this position and requested the draft Minutes were made available as soon as possible after each Meeting. The Vice-President confirmed that he and the Council Secretary would aim to issue the draft Minutes by the end of the week of each Meeting, where that was possible.

4.4 *Decision Making Matrix and Code of Conduct Working Group (DMMCCWP)*

The President noted that the Vice-President, as chair of the DMMCCWP had presented the sub-group's findings to SCOG. He referred to the papers circulated to the Council by the Independent Chair of SCOG.

It was noted that SCOG had had a lengthy discussion about the findings of the DMMCCWP and would now like to invite comments from the Council on the papers circulated, ahead of SCOG's next Meeting.

The President noted that Council Member comments should be sent to the Council Secretary as soon as possible to be incorporated into SCOG's next discussion.

ALL

4.5 *Forum Minutes*

The President raised that the issue of the publishing of forum minutes, in light of the passing of the motions at AGM 2, had been raised by a Council Member at a recent Council meeting and Council Members had been asked to consider how best this could be facilitated.

After discussion, it was **AGREED** that Forum Secretaries should send the Minutes directly to their Council Representative. Clubs could then request the Minutes directly from their Council Representative.

4.6 *Redaction Policy*

The Council Secretary referred to the circulated paper which was taken as read.

It was noted that since AGM 2, the Council and Board had published Minutes of their meetings on the Scottish Rugby website with redactions, having approved the redacted version for publication. The Minutes themselves had clearly shown where redactions had been made and provided a short reason for doing so.

The Council Secretary confirmed that a draft Policy had been prepared so that a consistent approach on redaction could be taken to the minutes of both the Council and Board, with a view to the Policy itself (if adopted) also being published.

During questions the following points were noted:

- In response to a question, the Council Secretary noted that the proposed proviso around the delay in publication would apply where there was a risk of harm being caused to the organisation, member clubs or individuals. The situation was likely to be rare, but recognising that situations could develop and change between the time of a meeting and the publication date it was thought sensible to provide the President or Chairman (as the case may be) with the ability to approve a delay in publication to avoid harm being caused, and to be open about that possibility in advance.
- The National 2 Representative advised that he had no issues with the policy itself but thus far had felt that some redactions had been unnecessary. The Council Secretary advised that Council feedback on suggested redactions was welcome during the approval process.

After consideration the Council **APPROVED** the adoption of the Policy, subject to an annual review of its terms.

5. **Player Payment Working Party (PPWP)**

The President noted that the Board had approved the Report of the PPWP, upon recommendation of the Council. A Member of Council should now be co-opted on to the Super6 Working Party. The President suggested the Vice-President for the role.

The Vice-President updated the Council that he had had internal Meetings with the High-Performance department and had also discussed the Working Group with Premiership representatives. It was intended that the representatives from the Premiership for the Super6 Working Party would be selected at the upcoming Premiership forum.

It was noted that the PPWP Report would be published on 19 March and the Working Group would have its first Meeting in April 2021, once its membership was confirmed.

After discussion, it was **AGREED** that the Vice-President would sit on the Super6 Working Party.

6. **Inclusion and Diversity**

The President referred to the recent Inclusion and Diversity training which had been undertaken by the Council and requested that Council Members should provide the Council Secretary with their feedback, if they have not already done so.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- The importance of having role models of diversity in the game was highlighted. These role models should be used to promote rugby throughout Scotland.
- The advancement of the women's game was recognised as a key target going forward to bring it into line with the men's game.
- It was highlighted the Council members should be encouraging each other to have open and frank discussions about diversity and inclusion, while being tolerant of others' views and opinions.

The President thanked the Council for their contributions and asked Council Members, ahead of the next Council Quarterly Meeting, to consider how the Council could work to introduce greater diversity into the game.

ALL

7. Women's Game Sub-Committee

The President noted that in order to advance the women's game, he had discussed the creation of a Women's sub-Committee with the Women's Representative. He asked for Members who wanted to be involved to put their name forward.

The Midlands Representative, Edinburgh Representative, Referee Representative and Glasgow South Representative had advised they would be happy to assist on the sub-group. The President advised that the Women's Representative was also considering potential Members to join.

It was highlighted that the sub-Committee did not need to only be made up of Council Members and should represent people from across the women's game.

The Edinburgh Representative highlighted that the sub-Committee should work in conjunction with the Council to ensure the women's game was integrated and not marginalised.

The Membership and remit of the sub-Committee would be confirmed to the Council in the coming weeks after consultation with the Women's Representative.

8. AOB

The following points were raised under AOB:

- The Vice-President noted the Council's congratulations to World Rugby on the new Women's competition and much needed additional funding for the Women's game.

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- The Vice-President, with the approval of the Council, asked for the President to formally congratulate Julie Paterson (previously of the Welsh Rugby Union) on her appointment as Director of Rugby at the 6 Nations.
- The Vice-President congratulated the British and Irish Lions for the feasibility study on creating a Women's British and Irish Rugby Team.

The Vice-President commented that in conjunction with the Strategy and Vision that the Council are discussing, this would be a pivotal moment for Women and Girls' rugby.

- The Rugby Europe Representative noted that he had been appointed to the Audit and Risk Committee of Rugby Europe. He noted he would provide the Council with relevant updates as and when he could.
- The Council Members discussed their engagement with their Clubs (some Members had used questionnaires, while others had conducted sessions at their forums) on the issues affecting them at the moment. It was noted that if Council Members were to provide other Council Members with the responses received from these questionnaires/sessions then responses should be anonymised. Further, it was noted the Rugby Development Department were carrying out a similar exercise so the Council should remain aligned with the work they were doing.

With all business concluded, the President thanked the Council for their time and closed the Meeting at 6.55pm.

Date of next meeting: 10 May 2021.

APPROVED 26 MARCH 2021