Best Practice & Governance Report

Date – 10 October 2023

Report compiled by Gary Robson

Key events, issues, and achievements since the last report.

Safeguarding –

- A joint safeguarding / rugby safe input was provided to General Committee and club CSO / RS reps on 18 September.
- RFU Safeguarding audits are currently being undertaken, NRU clubs currently around 75% complete. Reminder to the remaining clubs to complete.
- Several live safeguarding referrals and investigations ongoing within the CB.

RugbySafe –

- Liaison with clubs regarding new headcase concussion protocols, reporting procedures and the need to do the new training module.
- DPP have implemented their own protocol which has caused confusion. Liaison ongoing to resolve.
- Liaison with clubs regarding first aid courses and requirements etc. Communication difficulties apparent in some clubs.

Injured Player Welfare –

- The IPWO role is currently vacant. Several referrals dealt with by county office**.**

Discipline & Compliance –

- The season began with a flurry of red cards, as of Saturday morning 7th October things seem to have settled down. Four cases have been dealt with and one is pending.
- It is disturbing to note that two of the cases involve allegations of match official abuse.

- Tackle height law variation - we have dealt with two cases involving head contacts but these were both cases which would have come before the panel regardless of the law variation. (The RFU has reported that there has been no increase in the number of dangerous tackle red cards nationally).
- In addition to the caseload arising from matches several disciplinary issues have arisen out of an age grade match between a Northumberland and Durham club. Consultation regarding these issues is ongoing.
- The bi-annual RFU National Discipline Conference was held on 2nd and 3rd September in Bedfordshire. Kingsley Hyland, Alan Beddis, Malcolm Jarvie and Chris Davy represented the CB.
- Details of changes to disciplinary regulations were received from the RFU prior to the start of the league season. But of particular significance are new increased mandatory sanctions for breaches of Regulation 15 details of which have been sent to clubs.
- A detailed CB Discipline Manual has been produced.
- Two new members have been recruited to the Disciplinary Panel – Ally Hogg [former Scotland captain] and Janette Evans [former Red Roses Team manager].

CB Medical – Nothing to report

Neurodiversity –

- Working group established and held initial meeting on 30 August 2023. Further information to follow in due course.

Current and impending issues, events, and work streams

Safeguarding –

- A meeting is to be held between DoG, CBSM, Discipline Sec, AGDS and county administrator to examine handling of age grade discipline procedures.

RugbySafe -

Injured Player Welfare – Role to be advertised.

Discipline & Compliance –

- Several safeguarding investigations are currently pending which may result in referrals to CB Discipline.

- The RFU has set up a working group of which I am a member to re-write RFU Regulation 19 [Discipline]. The first meeting was scheduled for 5th October but had to be postponed.
- Discipline update to be provided to GC meeting in November.

CB Medical –

Nerodiversity -

Issues requiring Decision, Discussion or Dissemination

Ratification by Board of Portfolio Leads for 2023 / 24

Discipline Sec – Kingsley Hyland (AGDS – Chris Davy)

CBSM – Mark Reade

Rugby Safe – Cathryn Clark

CB Medical - Cathryn Clark

Neurodiversity – Claire Sharpe

Injured Player Welfare – Vacant

NB – This report must not include personal or identifiable data. If there is a need to report on Confidential matters, please forward communication separately marked 'Confidential'