Board Minutes – Wednesday 3rd July 2024 at Gosforth RFC

Present: Graham Crozier (Hon Secretary), Lee Weatherley (Chairman), Keith Atkinson (Club Development), Dean Gray (Mktg, Comms & Sponsorship), Claire Sharpe (County Administrator & Office Manager), Noel Mather (Senior Vice President) and Craig Wrightson (Vice President)

Invited to Attend: Ian Moralee (new incoming Dir of Rugby) and Ricky Handa (new incoming Dir of Governance) – due diligence checks still to take place

Apologies: Andrew Souter, Paul Tanney, Penny Stewart

The meeting opened with Dean being wished a happy birthday from Lee Weatherley (LW).

2. Meetings will be kept on time and on topic.

3. Immediate Issues – Graham Crozier (GC) has been passed a letter re an accident on 7th July 2020 to an individual (youth player). GC has spoken to Mark Reade (MR) and no record or register of "accident" on file. MR to speak to Ken Fraser at Morpeth to ask if something happened at club. **Action MR & GC**

4. Handover Pack/Bundle to be requested from Henry Cave by GC.

5. LW discussed the agenda – Development Plan and budget.
Issues around previous Board and Trustees and Trust insisting on form to be completed. GC and LW have met with Trust and agreed to £40K budget. £20k for Falcons Schools Project.

6. Schools Plans from Gosforth, Falcons RFC, Coast Cluster, Dougie Hall – meeting needs to be set up with clubs to set up a strategy with a board member from each club to confirm which schools are being targeted by each club. **Action: KA and IM**

7. Rugby Development – Keith Atkinson (KA) and Ian Moralee (IM) – 3-5 year plan on field and off field. Project plan. General Meetings will be used to develop the plan. Claire Sharpe (CS) discussed "One County, One Vision" and agreed to send to Directors so they may review and decide if they wish to continue with this initiative. Budget sheets from 2023-24 also requested and those on file (Rugby and Governance) will be sent on by CS. **Action: CS (information) Action – Directors (decision)**

8. LW discussed with Dean Gray (DG) County Membership and cards for members. Need to get this done. Ricky Handa (RH) will speak to some printers re County Membership cards. GC asked if we could not have a lunch at a county match – food and a pint sponsored event with own room within club hosting the match. DG to look into this. Membership is down to around 100. All Board Members should be County Members.
Action: DG & RH

LW to look at all Clubs Reps to be County Members. DG said this had been talked of previously and rejected. KA asked do we need Club Reps in the form that they currently are – do we need to look at this role? DG suggested this should be a senior member of clubs and must report back to their club. KA to look into this and develop. **Action: KA**

9. KA asked if coaches coaching County teams are insured and by whom. IM to carry out a review of coaches on GMS and Insurance aspect of coaches. **Action: IM**

10. Social Media – GC and CS to speak to James Barnett (JB) 04.07.24 re running social media, website and digital. **Action: GC and CS**

11. Autum International Raffle – DG, CS and JB to sort. **Action: DG, CS and JB**

12. Transparency and Organisation
Board Reports still need to be used.
Action Log to be looked at. LW to draw up plan. Al Dawes and Tom Gallon have offered some examples. **Action: LW**

13. Director of Finance - LW spoke about Finance Officer as this role needs to be filled.
ESG – Environmental, Social Governance Policy – some firms have this and this could be helpful to recruitment effort.
RH offered to speak to a few firms to see if ESG is available. GC will also speak again with Tim Lloyd.
Action – RH & GC

14. Director of Rugby – LW noted that the role is too big for one person and possibly need to think about putting assistants in place and lighten this load but also good for succession planning.

IM to send his thoughts and potential structures in place. CS asked if he was aware of the working groups and will send information through of these individuals and the groups to which they are attached.

IM to look to speak to these people and get them committed to staying in place. **Action IM & CS**

15. LW discussed development of these people especially with Womens Rugby v Mens, with women's numbers increasing massively and mens going the other way.

16. General Meetings – LW wants to review format of the General Meetings and how these will be run. Do we want to go back to discuss things that these people / clubs want to discuss. Do we want to discuss this and the people withing – refer back to point 8 and observation from KA.

IM – agenda for General Meetings MUST be out well before meetings. Discussion points to be agreed. AOB will need to be into County Office 7 days before meeting.