Minutes from Board Meeting, 06/01/2025 at Morpeth.

Present.
Lee Weatherley.
Graham Crozier.
Ian Moralee.
Dean Gray.
Brian Russell.
Penny Stewart.
Noel Mather.
Keith Atkinson.
John Austin.

Apologies.
Craig Wrightson.
Howard Ingram.
Paul Tanney.
Ricky Handa.

An initial meeting was held with the Executive of Morpeth RFC, present from Morpeth were John Stafford, Ken Fraser, James Richfield, and Simon Harries. A discussion of club issues was had and deemed a worthwhile one.

Main meeting commenced at 19:15.

1, Only two Board Reports were received, and a discussion was had regarding reports, and it was agreed that Board Reports will be requested 14 days before a Board meeting and should be submitted by 7 days of the Board Meeting. The Board Report Template will be re-sent out for all Directors. GC.

2, Compliance discussion, unfortunately Director of Governance was unable to attend so it was recorded that this will need to be delivered at the next Board Meeting.

3, RFU potential SGM. It was discussed that a letter had been sent to NRU Clubs directly from Adam White, RFRU Honorary Secretary requesting them to consider signing up to a collective motion calling for an SGM. This was discussed at length, and it was disappointing and a bit embarrassing that the NRU Board were unaware of these events and the direct contact with our clubs, as was it with our Council Rep, Penny Stewart who was also totally unaware of this approach by Adam White. It was agreed to discuss as an agenda item at the forthcoming Club Reps/General Committee meeting, 20/01/2025 at Tynedale. It was also agreed Hon Sec GC send a letter to Adam White informing him of the letter he has sent should have come to the NRU Board/Hon Sec first and foremost requesting contact with clubs. As this had not happened it was disappointing and embarrassing that an issue like this the chosen route was directly to clubs.
It was also agreed to send a letter to clubs to explain our embarrassment and dismay as to Adam White protocol. GC to action.

4, BR, Budget form needs to be commented on back to him with budgets envisaged so we can accurately understand the gap between our income and expenditure. information to be back to Brian before next meeting. BR has stated to ratify any new projects these need to be put forward with full costings so the budget can be kept and monitored. ALL.

5, Development Plan, LW presented the initial draft of the Development Plan and how this will work and where input will be from varying Directors. Individual themes and development areas will be headed up by a director with a sub working group to assist in the development of their

area and within the plan, a 'Talent Bank' where these individuals can also be developed and become our successors. JA having total oversight of the plan and the lead Director for the development of the whole plan.

6, Value the Volunteer nominations and event. The VtV nominations requests have been sent out to all groups, WhatsApp, e-mail, Facebook etc for nominations of people for the categories for VtV. A discussion regarding the method of presentation was discussed with 2 options discussed, 1 as was held last year at Morpeth with an evening event and 2, a County programme event as has also been done previously. DG, GC and CS tasked to sort this and report back at next meeting.

7, Sponsorship, a discussion around what Sponsorship offering we had and what sponsors we had and what the received in return. Also discussed was a document of our offering to sponsors, a bronze, silver, and gold offering document to be produced, something like was developed previously by PS. DG to draft this up for the next meeting.

8, County Programme. Cost vs quality of current offering with examples of other County and Club programmes. The current programme does not reflect well the County and a better presented offering to be investigated and costed. This to include a note/welcome from our President, sponsorship page and Team information which is already in our programme but look to be presented in a better format. GC, DG and CS to take this task on.
It was also discussed that more programmes could be sold if we had a card reader, a Summit Machine or, an APP on the phone of the person selling the programmes. This to be investigated too, as would be a donation for the programme instead of a set cost.

9, Raffle and continuation, this was discussed at length and 2 issues are apparent in that the volume of work involved in promoting recent raffles vs the income gained is not effective. The last raffle generated sales of £960.00 with a profit of only £94.00. The second Point on the raffle was the Gambling Act, in that it is illegal to promote gambling to under 25's and as most of our Facebook pages and WhatsApp groups are aimed at Age Grade we are potentially breaking the law. A vote was taken to stop promoting and doing a raffle and by a unanimous decision it was agreed to cease the raffle.

9A, NRU County membership was discussed, again at length, with cost, package offering, and an increase in cost being discussed. GC & DG to sort an offering/package of what potential members will gain from the having NRU membership.

10, Data Officer, IM has been discussing with Tommy More of Ashington the role of Data Officer and we have agreed to offer Tommy this role and he has accepted on being ratified by the Board. A vote was taken, and all were in favour. Tommy works in IT and is employed by Northumberland County Council as a lead IT Support Officer. He is also the technical lead on the accreditation of NCC's Public Service Network that provides a secure way for public sector bodies to share data and communications. Tom is also responsible for cybersecurity and GDPR compliance.
Tommy will implement a Data system and documentation and Train CS in the areas she will require, CS has had no training whatsoever and is our current Data Officer and this needs to be addressed for compliance.

DRAFT

11, Concussion Reporting, as RH was not in attendance this will need to be discussed at the next meeting. Our current system needs to be discussed for fear of not being GDPR compliant, RH to investigate before next meeting.
The discussion of the 'golden hour/24 hour' in concussions where these were the critical time periods in concussions. With our office closed on a weekend and not opening until Monday this golden period is lost as we will not be reacting to a concussion until potentially 40 hours post the concussion. We need to discuss this and Proactive system and the possible implementation of this within NRU. As such Cathryn Clarke is to be invited to the next meeting and we need to discuss this at length and the best options for us. NM to invite Cathryn.
IM is to investigate costs for Proactive for all clubs as a total and DG is to look for a potential sponsor for this if this is what we propose to move to.

12, Innovation Funding, an update by GC as to where we are was given, all projects within the Referee Recruitment and Development are underway and working well with a good discussion pre meeting with Morpeth RFC regarding the project for Club Referee Support and including them in this and using Morpeth as part of the development group of this project. Regarding Player Retention all projects bar one has started, IM has agreed to implement the adult grade touch rugby summer circuit and work with his project. A discussion of utilising the summer of touch already set up could be investigated.

13, NRU County Members Pie & a Pint match needs to be chosen along with a suitable venue where we can host Members in a separate room. IM & GC to sort.

AOB

PS Asked if we are still intending to invite Niall Head Rapson to the Club Reps/General Committee meeting on 20/01/25 to give his Stem Cell presentation and this was confirmed. PS has some inroads into Cumbria and Durham for him. GC confirming with Niall.

PS Requested being able to have Mel Magee and Steve Savage, Chair of WRWC Sunderland event, present at Club Reps/General Committee meeting on 20/01/25 to give presentation of WRWC development, Beach Festivals etc. This was agreed.

PS Requested a slot at Board meetings going forwards to report on the WRWC, again this was agreed.

NM, Requested we work hard to stamp out Match Official Abuse and that we should come down hard on any offender. LW & GC informed the meeting of an upcoming meeting with NRU, Referees Society and Discipline to set development plans around this and work on education and awareness and assisting Club Reps. LW & GC will report back to the Board at the next meeting. DG has suggested we update the Fair Play Code flyer, DG to sort.

KA Wanted it to be recorded that the school to club project which is being co-ordinated with the Newcastle falcons is struggling financially with a lack of funding for this project. Clubs being knocked back when applying for funding, stating that there is no money there. There looks to be a short fall of £7,500 in each of years 2 & 3 and we need to look at this school's programme to

be further funded by the Trust potentially. KA has reported that this needs a full-time person running this project and as such funds are not sufficient to do this in Y1 and Y2.

GC Gave a quick update on the Tour to Spain in late 2026/2027 season where great interest is building, and the plan is coming together. Tour letter to go out to teams, Senior Women, Senior Men together with U20's. Tour to be as self-funding as possible, and a contribution of £500 per person in sponsorship or payment from each tourist will be required and will include travel, accommodation, stash, etc. if 25 players per team with a £500 contribution, this will generate an initial pot of £37,500. Sponsorship opportunities are also available and will be sought. To be discussed with Trust regarding previous tour and their involvement.

The meeting ended at 21:08.
Next meeting is Monday 03/02/2025 at 19:00.
Venue is provisionally Prudhoe & Stocksfield.

DRAFT