County Office and Hon Secretary Report

Date – 17th October

Report compiled by Graham Crozier and Claire Sharpe

Key events, issues, and achievements

A very busy start to the new season.

Have continued to meet with key personnel in county providing admin assistance and backup on projects to be run.

Continued to liaise with Directors, Chair and Secretary assisting them where required.

Collation of budget requirements from individual budget holders has been completed and the overall spreadsheet updated and finalised.

Continued to liaise with RFU team.
RFU returns submitted since last report – County Championship entry for 25-26, Club Workshop Return to Martin Woodward, Merit Table Funding and October RFU budget update.

CB IT systems have moved over to Office 365. Teething issues to start with but have worked through those. Lost all mailing groups in the migration over but collating new groups now (but need clubs to submit their new season returns so the groups are accurate).

Work continues on the CB AUP (Acceptable Use Policy) – now expanding out to cover club digital folders. (relates to data protection and GDPR.)

The move back to the CB Digital Systems for ALL Age Grade Regulation 15 forms has taken place successfully. Issue in late August when updates to the internal workings of the digital system fried the system so forms did go down for a couple of days, but we worked round this. At time of writing, 533 forms have been received and processed so far this season. Thanks should be recorded to James Barnett for his work on this project re-instating all of the forms over the summer.
We are now reviewing club digital folder access (linking to the club returns submitted) and with that linking in the new Club AUP.

Comms with all club age grade coaches via WhatsApp continue – lots of chat and lots of positive comms going on between clubs. Queries being answered, Ash Smith feeding in on RFU courses, Falcons Foundation/Newcastle Red Bull updates going into chats alongside general reminders.

Work continues on the re working the Clubs Section on the website. Still waiting on some clubs to complete their returns from request made middle of July. (This in turn is holding up the review of digital folder access and the AUP for clubs.)

Age Grade Calendar for Season 2025-26 continues to evolve.
Provisional bookings of the AGP at WBR now no longer required have been cancelled out so we have made some savings there.
We have also altered how pitch time is worked this season so we no longer book three hours for a two hour session.
Considerable savings on pitch costs and I am in communication now with members of the 365 team as we edit these bookings.

All CB Club cup draws for season 2025-26 have been made (U13 to U16 boys, U14, U16 and U18 Girls, Colts and all of the Adult Cup Competitions). The Under 14 and Under 16 Girls comps have had to be revised due to changes in numbers of teams.

Continued to provide support to RugbySafe and Safeguarding Leads. Lots of comms with both Cathryn and Mark as going into this new season we have revised some of the systems we are using and we have changed how we record some of the matters that come in to us and this is all working really well. At the time of writing, 51 concussion reports have been submitted and where permissions are in place GRAS letters have been sent out. At the time of writing 13 IPW forms have been submitted from clubs and these have all been followed up and where necessary advice and assistance offered.

Kit audit has been completed following the move of the kit store from Unit 4 (across the car park) to this building.

Current and impending issues, events, and work streams

CB AUP (Acceptable Use Policy) – a number of users are still to sign off on this. As agreed with the CB Data Protection Officer, access to mailboxes and data will be blocked if returns are not received. A cut off date has been agreed and final review of those who still need to sign off is underway.
CB AUP at Club Level is now underway with draft policy drawn up and now ready to be sent to individual clubs.

A number of club updates are still required. This is holding up the above work and also the assignment of access to club digital folders.

Work about to begin on the printed outer cover for County Match Programmes – discussed over the summer and we now need to start prep work on this.

We are about to launch the Autum Raffle (two pairs of tickets to England v Ireland and tickets to a Newcastle Red Bull match).

We are about to launch the comms on the Club Development Day being held at WBR on the 10th November.

Issues requiring Decision, Discussion or Dissemination

NIL.