

MIDDLESEX NOTES ON THE RFU COUNCIL MEETING

Held at The Kensington Garden Hotel - 2nd June 2017

The meeting was chaired by the President, Peter Baines.

The meeting started with a period of reflection in memory of John Jeavons-Fellows and David Hurst, who passed away recently. Both were Privilege Members of the Union

1. 2017/21 Strategic Plan

(Ian Ritchie - Chief Executive Officer
& Stephen Brown - Chief Officer of Business Operations)

- 1.1 Ian Ritchie introduced the 2017/21 Strategic Plan, which Stephen Brown then presented.
- 1.2 In essence, the Strategic Plan is based on solid "Business as Usual" plus some important strategic priorities for the next 4 years.
- 1.3 The Strategic Plan states that the purpose of the RFU is:
TO ENCOURAGE RUGBY, AND ITS VALUES, TO FLOURISH ACROSS ENGLAND
and this is supported by the vision:
TO BE ENGLAND'S STRONGEST SPORT AND THE WORLD'S LEADING RUGBY NATION
- 1.4 Over the term of the Strategic Plan the strategic priorities will be to Protect, Engage, Grow & Win (see **Appendix 1**).
- 1.5 Over the four-year period of the Strategic Plan more than £400m will be invested in the game, meaning that more than 60% of all revenues produced by the RFU will be invested in the game. 62% of the monies will be invested in the professional game and 38% in the community game.
- 1.6 A group of Council members and the Board have been involved in devising of the Strategic Plan and both recommended its approval.
- 1.7 Council unanimously **APPROVED** the 2017/21 Strategic Plan.
- 1.8 The plan will now be communicated to the Game.

2. 2017/18 Business Plan & Budget

(Stephen Brown - Chief Officer of Business Operations)

- 2.1 Stephen Brown presented the 2017/18 Business Plan & Budget to Council.
- 2.2 The Budget for 2017/18 shows a net break-even position, against the 16/17 forecast loss of £8m (which is in line with the 2016/17 budget, after the £3.2m adjustment for the new players' deal).
- 2.3 Overall revenue growth is driven largely by the £26.5m Compass contribution related to the East Stand Development (ESD), as underlying ticket revenues are down with 2017/18 being a low match profile year.
- 2.4 Profit for Rugby Investment increases 19% to £107.6m, of which £106.6m is invested in the game (an increase of 6%).
- 2.5 The ESD is scheduled to complete at the end of the plan period, with a £51m spend in 2017/18.
- 2.6 Phase 2 of the Artificial Grass Pitches (AGP) capital investment programme will see 15 pitches built, along with the last 2 from phase 1, at a total cost in 2017/18 of £14m.
- 2.7 Total overheads increase year on year by only £0.9m (2%) of which £0.6m is depreciation.
- 2.8 Professional rugby investment is up £4.1m (6%) versus 2016/17, largely reflecting the phasing of the new Professional Game Agreement (PGA).
- 2.9 Rugby development investment is up £2.0m (6%) driven by both Rugbyshare costs and Rugbyturf depreciation.

- 2.10 The AGP investment programme means that the cash investment ratio (Professional v Development) for 2017/18 is 57%:43%.
- 2.11 The balance sheet remains strong, with net assets forecast to be £203.6m by 30th June 2018.
- 2.12 The £50m RBS Revolving Credit Facility remains in place and will be fully utilised during the year.
- 2.13 Council unanimously **APPROVED** the 2017/18 Budget

3. HMG Governance Code

(Jason Leonard - Chairman of the Governance Code Working Group
& Angus Bujalski – Legal & Governance Director)

- 3.1 Jason Leonard updated Council on the latest discussions with Sport England on the adoption of the Sport England Governance Code.
- 3.2 Whilst Sport England were generally supportive of the RFU, and were prepared to grant some flexibility on some of the proposals, they did not accept all the amendments that the RFU were seeking.
- 3.3 The RFU Governance Code Working Group has discussed the written response from Sport England and has agreed the proposals to be put to Council. It is believed that, if the proposals are adopted by the Game, Sport England will regard the RFU as having complied fully with the Code.
- 3.4 Council **APPROVED** the proposals (see **Appendix 2**).
- 3.5 The Governance Standing Committee will now prepare the necessary Rule changes required to adopt the proposals with a view that these will be presented at the September Council meeting. If approved by Council the changes will be put to a Special General Meeting of the Union, which is provisionally scheduled for Friday 24th November 2017 at Twickenham
- 3.6 Work will now commence on changing the terms of reference of the Governance Code Working Group so that it becomes an implementation group. Jason Leonard has stated that he feels it would be inappropriate for him to continue as Chairman of the group, so a new Chairman will need to be appointed. The terms of reference of the group and its composition will also need to be reviewed.
- 3.7 Work will also now commence on the setting up of the Diversity & Inclusion Working Group. The aim of the group is to make recommendation to increase the player and administrative resource at all levels of the game though the opportunities offered through increased diversity & inclusivity.
- 3.8 Consideration will now be given to the composition and terms of reference of the Board Nominations Sub Committee, the Council Nominations Sub-Committee and the staggering of Council terms to avoid a “mass” departure. Proposals will be brought back to Council for approval.
- 3.9 Consideration will also need to be given how casual vacancies will be filled for those appointments, subject to ratification by a General Meeting.

4. Nominations Committee Membership

(Simon Collyer-Bristow - Chairman of Nominations Standing Committee)

- 4.1 Council **APPROVED** the change in Terms of Reference of the Nominations Standing Committee, which included an increase in the number of Council members on the Nominations Standing Committee from four to five.
- 4.2 Council **APPROVED** the appointment of the following Council members to the Nomination Standing Committee for the terms stated:
 - ~ John **CUNNINGHAM** (2 years)
 - ~ David **EWING** (2 Years)
 - ~ Charlie **McGINTY** (2 years)
 - ~ Genevieve **GLOVER** (Independent) (2 years)

The complete list of those Council members who will serve on Council Nominations Committee in 2017/18 is shown in **Appendix 3**.

5. Nominations Standing Committee Report

(Simon Collyer-Bristow - Chairman of Nominations Standing Committee)

- 5.1 Council **APPROVED** the recommendation of the Nominations Standing Committee that the following be elected to serve on the RFU as Directors without Portfolio for the terms stated:
 - ~ Deborah **GRIFFIN** (3 years)
 - ~ Stephen **PEARSON** (3 Years)
 - ~ Malcolm **WHARTON** (2 years)
- 5.2 Council **APPROVED** the recommendation of the Nominations Standing Committee that Jim **COULSON** and Stuart **POTTS** be awarded Privilege Membership of the RFU.

- 5.3 Council **APPROVED** the recommendation of the Nominations Standing Committee regarding the appointment of Council members to the Committees and Sub Committees (see **Appendix 4.1**).
- 5.4 Council **APPROVED** the recommendations of the Nominations Standing Committee regarding the appointment of Council members to represent the RFU on other bodies (see **Appendix 4.2**).
- 6. RFU Regulations 2017/18**
(Alys Lewis - Senior Governance Manager)
- 6.1 Alys Lewis presented the 2017 Regulations Changes to Council.
- 6.2 Council **AGREED** to grant delegated authority to the Governance Standing Committee to finalise the drafting of the following regulations.
- ~ Premiership
 - ~ Championship
 - ~ Anglo Welsh
 - ~ British & Irish Cup
 - ~ NatWest Cup
 - ~ AASE
- 6.3 Council **AGREED** to grant delegated authority to the Legal & Governance Department and Chair of the Governance Standing Committee to finalise the drafting of all the other regulations.
- 7. Aide Memoires 2017/18**
(Peter Baines - President)
- 7.1 The Aide Memoires covers the responsibilities and entitlements afforded to Past Presidents, Council members and Privilege members.
- 7.2 Council **APPROVED** the Aide Memoire for the 2017/18 season.
- 8. Council Remuneration**
(Colin Baldwin - Chairman of Council Remuneration Working Group)
- 8.1 At its meeting in February 2017, Council agreed that the Compensation Advisory Panel (CAP) be abolished and that Council members on the RFU Board should receive a service fee. Council also agreed that the Governance Standing Committee should review whether there were any posts, held by Council members, which should receive a service fee.
- 8.2 The Governance Standing Committee asked Colin Baldwin to Chair a task group to consider the matter.
- 8.3 The task group recommended to the Governance Standing Committee that the service fee payments should not be extended. The Governance Standing Committee supported this position and recommended it to Council.
- 8.4 Council **AGREED** with the Governance Standing Committee's recommendation that service payments should not be extended to cover any non-Board positions.
- 9. Chairman's Report**
(Andy Cosslett - Chairman of the Board)
- 9.1 Work continues implementing the recommendations from the Board Effectiveness Review.
- 9.2 Representatives from the Board continue to meet with the Nominations Committee to discuss their work.
- 9.3 The Board continues to work on the Board appointments for the 2017/18 season. These should be finalised shortly.
- 9.4 The agendas for Board meeting are being amended to permit more time for more strategic discussions. More routine decisions will be made by email to free up the necessary time.
- 9.5 Following Ian Ritchie's decision to retire at the end of the summer, a recruitment process for the CEO position has commenced.
- 9.6 Andy Cosslett paid tribute to the work that Ian Ritchie had carried out on behalf of the Union.
- 10. Chief Executive's Report**
(Ian Ritchie - Chief Executive Officer)
- 10.1 Senior England Squad**
- a. The Argentina tour squad was announced on 20th April 2017 following Lions selection on 19th April 2017. 16 players from England have been selected to represent the Lions.
 - b. The game against the Barbarians took place on 28th May 2017 and was won by an inexperienced England team.

10.2 Professional Rugby

a. Professional Rugby Department

- i. Gordon Lord has joined the RFU as Head of Elite Coach Development.
- ii. Mark Bennett will join the RFU on 1st July 2017 as Head of Sports Science and Medicine.
- iii. Dom Barrell (Saracens) has been appointed as Head of National Academies.
- iv. Nicky Ponsford has been directed to head up Women's Rugby World Cup and pathway 15's programme. Simon Amor will oversee Men's and Women's Sevens moving forward. Elaine Skelton will administer the creation of the new Elite Women's Competition.
- v. The Professional Rugby Department Leadership team is now complete.
- vi. RFU 'Gainline' Awards have been presented to three PRD staff members for outstanding service, Russell Earnshaw (Coaching), Penny Craig (Wellington Festival) and Benji Crossley (Competitions and Events).

b. Operations

- i. Facility developments continue at Pennyhill Park Hotel with planning permission being sought for the installation of a running/conditioning hill and a Desso area for scrummaging and lineouts.
- ii. A number of meetings have taken place with the Lensbury Hotel and St Mary's University to explore whether the hotel, and the adjacent land owned by the university, can form the basis of a national training facility for pathway teams.

c. Rugby Competitions and Events

- i. Saracens won the Champions Cup for the second successive year.
- ii. Exeter won the Aviva Premiership Final for the first time.
- iii. London Irish won the Championship Play-offs.
- iv. The Women's Premiership play-offs took place at Sixways on 23rd April 2017 together with the Girls U15 and U18 club cup finals. The National U17s final took place on 30th April 2017.
- v. The NatWest Schools competition finished on 28 March 2017 at Sixways and 29 March 2017 at Twickenham. Plans are already underway for next season.
- vi. The Army v Navy match on 29th April 2017 at Twickenham was a sell-out.
- vii. Plans are progressing well for the Mitsubishi Motors Exeter 7s which will take place for the third year at Sandy Park Stadium on 15th/16th July 2017.

d. Professional Game Match Officials Team (PGMOT)

- i. A Match Officials Strategy Board was held on 30th March in Bristol. The Q3 analysis statistics showed increased accuracy and positive trends.
- ii. Representatives from the PGMOT attended the PRL Directors of Rugby meeting on 7th April 2017 at Heathrow
- iii. Tony Spreadbury completed visits to all Premiership Clubs during the season except for Worcester.
- iv. The PGMOT referees have completed 44 Club support sessions this season.
- v. The four Contracted Assistant Referees have been utilised in every Premiership round since January and have performed to a high standard.

e. World Rugby June 2017 International Window Appointments

- i. Matthew Carley has been appointed to referee his first Tier One test (Australia v Italy), which affords him International Referee Status. He will be presented with his Silver Rose blazer on his return.
- ii. Wayne Barnes, Matthew Carley and Luke Pearce have been appointed as match officials for the summer tests. Rowan Kitt and Sean Davey have received TMO appointments and Chris White has been appointed as Test Performance Reviewer for the Third Lions Test.
- iii. Sara Cox and Claire Hodnett have been appointed as referees for the Women's Rugby World Cup and Ian Tempest has been appointed as Assistant Referee and first reserve referee

- iv. Tom Foley has been appointed to referee at the under 20s Championship and Christophe Ridley has been appointed as Assistant Referee
 - v. Ian Tempest refereed Georgia v Russia on 12th March 2017, Matthew Carley refereed Poland v Switzerland on 22nd April 2017 and Craig Maxwell-Keys will referee Luxembourg v Czech Republic on 6th May 2017.
- f. **Women's Elite Competition**
- i. The appeals by Lichfield RFC and Thurrock RFC, following the failure of their application to join the new league, have been completed and were rejected.
 - ii. The name and brand for the competition has not yet been finalised.
 - iii. Elaine Skelton is now heading up the competition.
 - iv. The first League games will be 16th September 2017 with the final on 28th April 2018.
- g. **Men's Pathway**
- i. Five Under 20s players have been selected to tour Argentina with the senior team this summer, which will weaken the squad traveling to the Under 20s World Championships in Georgia.
 - ii. Wellington Festival: This was the second year of the new format. The 14 England Academy squads spent a week in camp training followed by a series of games and selection of U16 England team.
 - iii. The Under 18s participated in their 'round robin' tournament in Wales beating Canada, Ireland and Scotland.
 - iv. Camps have been held in France for Under 17s and Under 19s.
 - v. The National Performance group (England futures U16-22 players identified as elite athletes most likely to play for England) held a 'Big Brother' event in Minehead. These camps are designed to develop these young men as leaders and challenge them mentally.
 - vi. Selection and preparations is now underway for the Under 18s South Africa development tour and Under 20s World Championships.
- h. **Sevens (Men and Women)**
- i. At the end of the Sevens Series, the men finished second; their best placed finish for a decade.
 - ii. Simon Amor now overseeing both men's and women's sevens programmes.
- i. **Women's Rugby World Cup Preparations**
- Preparations continue with team camps. Preparations for the tour to New Zealand are going well. Nicky Ponsford will now focus full-time on the team and its preparations for the Women's Rugby World Cup in Ireland in August 2017.
- 10.3 **Rugby Development**
- a. **Playing data**
- i. EY have completed a 5 week assignment to interrogate options around the tracking of players, an area identified as a priority by CGB within the 2016/17 business planning cycle. The interim findings of this were presented to the Community Game Board where they were received positively. The next stage is to develop options for a staged trial implementation from the start of 2017/18 season.
 - ii. A detailed collection of planned matches during the 2016/17 season has taken place across all age groups from Under 14s and above. This is currently being verified by comparison with data collected via Two Circles from GMS, Who's the Ref and Pitchero. Once complete it will give a first accurate baseline of planned matches and provide some very useful insight into playing patterns at Clubs and CBs.
- b. **World Rugby/Tier One Community Sevens project**
- Steve Grainger has been chairing a World Rugby Tier One working group on the development of a community sevens offering. Trials are currently underway and if successful will be approved by World Rugby for worldwide implementation. The primary audience remains adults who are either new to rugby or recently lapsed.

- c. **Club Development**
 - i. 41 volunteer of the year awards events will take place during May, June and July at locations around the country. Each CB will identify a winner and they will be invited to the national awards event at Twickenham in September.
 - ii. Young Rugby Ambassador numbers have risen to 1,362 with over 20,000 hours of volunteering logged. 77 awards have been made to young volunteers that have completed 100 hours, 197 for 50 hours and 278 for 30 hours.
 - iii. The application process for the 2017/18 cohort of Leadership in Union has commenced. The 2016/17 cohort had their final residential course on 13th May 2017. The 13 Leadership Academies for 2016/17 are now ending.
 - iv. 593 Clubs have registered for NatWest Rugby Force with 385 Cubs selected for grant awards.
 - d. **Game Development**
 - i. Course attendances year to date Q3 stands at 10,424 (2015/16: 9,054). Meanwhile interest and take-up of alternatives to face to face delivery are gaining good traction.
 - ii. The Keep Your Boots On campaign continues to get good engagement - 2,814 hits during March converting to 385 moving to booking.
 - iii. The results of the "Functional Movement Control" research programme has now been published. The study shows that the incidence of injury seems to reduce significantly when a simple warm-up (devised as part of the study programme) is utilised regularly. As a result, the programme will be developed into an "RFU Activate" injury prevention programme and introduced from the 2017/18 season.
 - e. **Education Development**
 - i. 653 Clubs and schools are now signed up to the Old Mutual Wealth Kids First pledge (against a target of 500).
 - ii. Discussions are advancing well with three clusters of universities with a view to part funding a post in each cluster and supporting the student population in these cities to work more collaboratively.
 - f. **Rugby Growth/Player Development**
 - i. Registered players in O₂ Touch now stand at 19,940 with activity in 355 centres.
 - ii. A further 100 Pitch up and Play sites were launched in May 2017 as part of the Inner Warrior campaign. The aim is to introduce a new cohort of females into the game, transitioning into Clubs for the 2017/18 season.
 - iii. The national 24/7's competition is underway. The National finals will take place in July 2017, following regional play offs and local qualifiers.
 - iv. The England Counties Seniors tour Spain in June with the Under 20s touring Holland.
 - v. Work has commenced on the schedules for all aspirational teams for the next four years.
- 10.4 **Commercial Update**
- a. **Merchandising**
 - i. Year to date Q3 March licensing and retail revenue are 16% ahead of budget; this is mainly driven by non-budgeted sales for East Stand store and strong match day sales.
 - ii. The process of outsourcing stadium retail operations to Fanatics is underway and expected to be completed in August 2017.
 - b. **Museum**

A detailed scope of works has been finalised and it is hoped that the Museum will reopen before the start of the 2018 Six Nations.
 - c. **Partnerships/Business Development**
 - i. A number of sponsorship renewals are being negotiated.
 - ii. Secure Trading will be the shirt sponsor of the men's and women's 7s teams and will provide committed marketing support to the 24Sevens programme.
 - iii. Various other conversations are taking place covering multiple categories including health and fitness, insurance, timing, FMCG and alcohol. Discussions are focused on Women's Rugby, Artificial Grass Pitches, Stadium and digital.

- d. **Debentures and Executive Boxes**
 - i. East Stand Debentures: Over 85% of the new 2,230 East Stand Enhanced Debentures have been sold and the rest should be sold by the end of June 2017.
 - ii. Executive Boxes: Box sales already exceed the anticipated figure, with a record 90% renewal rate.
 - e. **England Rugby Hospitality (ERH)**
 - i. Ansell Henry has been appointed as ERH Sales Director and will join during the summer. 25 other sales and marketing roles are being recruited with a view to ERH being fully staffed in time for the launch in October 2017.
 - ii. Market Research: qualitative and quantitative market research has been conducted by Davis+McKerr to corroborate price and product benchmarking by KP as part of the business plan. There are no material consequences to the business plan coming out of the research but it has highlighted some sale challenges which we will address in the sales and marketing plan.
 - iii. Keith Prowse: Keith Prowse will be moving their head office to Webb Ellis House in September to coincide with the sales launch of ERH.
 - f. **Ticketing**
 - i. Club Online Orders: testing is underway for the new online Club ticket ordering system. The Ticketing team will deliver Pilot test session with Clubs and CBs over the summer.
 - ii. Ticket Sanctions: The Ticket Sanctions Committee met on 13th April 2017 to review the 6 Nations. Sanctions have been made known to offending Clubs, individuals and CBs.
 - iii. Non-rugby events: Interest remains strong in Twickenham for concert events in 2018 and 2019 however 2018 will be challenging due to East Stand Development.
- 10.5 Digital, Marketing & Communications**
- a. CRM: The team is now complete, following recruitment of an analytics specialist to provide data insight and segmentation.
 - b. Email and digital engagement remains high with an average of 33% open rates and a growing database. 9m emails have been sent this year, driving half a million clicks to England Rugby content or ticket offers online, with over £300k in ticket sales attributable to CRM email campaigns.
 - c. England Rugby Club (ERC): The ERC fan membership programme launched in December 2016 and will approach its first renewal period in July 2017 this year.
 - d. Inner Warrior Campaign: The second wave of the campaign is now live with a focus on recruiting 1,000 new females through the Warrior Camps.
 - e. O₂ Touch: The new App and website has been launched and a popup event is planned.
 - f. 24/Sevens: 40 x Local Play Offs are currently underway nationwide. The finals will take place in Bath on 29th July. Participation target is 10,000.
 - g. Brand Metrics: Post Event Survey: 93% of RBS 6 Nations attendees in 2017 rated the overall experience as Good or Excellent which is an increase of 10% over 2016.
 - h. Women's Rugby World Cup: Campaign plan agreed to encourage support for the Red Roses in the build up to and during the WRWC (9th to 26th August 2017).
 - i. Social media growth: The channels continued to grow during the RBS 6 Nations. Social media is now the biggest driver of traffic to EnglandRugby.com accounting for 40% of traffic referral.
 - j. Monthly national media briefings continue to be held.
 - k. A decision has been taken to keep the Press box and adjoining work area in the East Stand.
- 10.6 Business Operations**
- a. HR Resources: As part of a restructure of the IT team, six employees have left the organisation and seven new roles have been created and are currently being recruited.
 - b. Local Community Relations
 - i. The first East Stand Liaison Group meeting (in accordance with the s.106 agreement in the planning permission with the designated attendees) was held on 11th April 2017.
 - ii. A newsletter, which outlines the RFU's local community work, will be circulated to residents.

c. **CSR and Fundraising**

- i. The Try for Change Small Grants round closed on 31st March 2017 with 40 applications received from community clubs and small charities. 14 projects will now be taken through to assessment. The aim is to invest £100k in this grant round.
- ii. The Official England Rugby Events for 2017 are on sale.
- iii. The RFU, together with our Military Charity Partner 2017 the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, has launched #RugbyRemembers – a social media campaign and competition to encourage Clubs and schools to remember fallen rugby players.

d. **Public Affairs**

- i. The planned introduction of a Corporation Tax deduction for investment into grassroots sport has been postponed because the Finance Bill was significantly scaled back in order to pass key measures in time for the Dissolution of Parliament. The RFU will work to ensure that this is returned to the agenda of our discussions with Government as soon as possible.
- ii. The RFU is working with the DCMS on the implementation of the recommendations in the Duty of Care review.
- iii. The RFU is continuing to explore the impact of the Apprenticeship Levy with other sports and third sector organisations.
- iv. Summer tour RFU representation has now been confirmed. The President and CEO will attend the two Senior tests in Argentina, the Chairman and President will attend the Lions Tour and the Senior Vice President will represent the President at the World Rugby Under 20s Championship in South Africa and the Under 18s tour to South Africa.

e. **Safeguarding**

The Safeguarding team has been expanded with the addition of a further case officer. Clare Scott joins from the Metropolitan Police's Serious Sexual Offences unit.

f. **Discipline**

The Discipline team has appointed a new batch of citing commissioners and the recruitment for the new Independent Head of Judiciary has commenced.

g. **Information Technology**

An Information Security review has now commenced internally. The review will provide a risk based perspective of the RFU's current state against ISO 27001, GDPR, PCI and Cyber Essentials standards and provide a prioritised set of recommendations.

10.7 **Personal Statement by Ian Ritchie**

"As Council will have seen I have decided to retire at the end of the summer. It felt the right time from a personal perspective and enables the union to plan for the 2019 and 2023 World Cups. It has been a real privilege to serve as CEO of the RFU and my abiding memory will be of those who play and support rugby around the country. I have enjoyed fantastic support from Chairman, Board, Council and the RFU staff throughout my tenure and would like to thank you all for that. I am sure that rugby will go from strength to strength and wish you and the game every success in the future."

11. **International Report**

(Ben Calveley - Head of International & Public Affairs)

11.1 Since the last Council meeting there has been a World Rugby Council meeting on the 10th May 2017, the RWC 2019 draw has taken place, Rugby Europe has met to discuss the development of their strategic plan and the Six Nations have announced the fixture dates for 2018 & 2019.

11.2 **World Rugby**

- a. The World Rugby Council meeting took place on 10th May 2017 in Kyoto, Japan. The RWC 2019 draw took place the same day and England was drawn in Pool C with France, Argentina, Americas 1 and Oceania 2.
- b. During the Council meeting the main issues on the agenda were proposed changes to the World Rugby Regulations and Bye-Laws and the agreement to the Global Season. World Rugby was seeking Council's agreement to amend Regulation 8 (eligibility to play for National Representative Teams) with the main change being an increase in the residency requirement from three to five years and this was approved.
- c. Changes to Regulation 9 to bring the international windows in line with the new global calendar were agreed by Council.

- d. Council agreed to update Regulation 12 to introduce specifications for player monitoring devices and alter Regulation 21 to bring it into line with the WADA code.
- e. World Rugby also agreed to amend their Bye-Laws to change the Law Review Cycle. The effect of which is to remove the current four-year Law Review Cycle and permit is that Unions propose new Laws changes at any time (although there will still be a purdah period of 12 months before Rugby World Cups. The changes will come into effect post RWC 2019.
- f. Bernard Laporte (FFR) was elected to replace Pierre Camou (FFR) on EXCO.
- g. Finally, Council approved a recommendation from the Nominations Committee, to award Japan and Argentina an additional vote each on Council. The new voting allocation is shown in **Appendix 5**.

11.3 Six Nations

- a. The fixtures have now been announced for 2018 & 2019 (see **Appendix 6**).
- b. Discussions continue on reducing the Six Nations from seven weeks to six weeks.

11.4 Rugby Europe

- a. Gibraltar has been seeking membership of Rugby Europe for over two years and has now asked the RFU to support its desire to have the matter reconsidered by Rugby Europe. The RFU has agreed to assist in this, although there is likely to be strong opposition from other members.
- b. The Rugby Europe Strategic Plan Working Group met on 18th May 2017 to discuss their draft strategic plan.
- c. The next General Assembly will take place on 30th June/1st July 2017 in Luxembourg.

11.5 EPCR

Mohed Altrad, the owner of Montpellier, has now withdrawn his offer to buy a share of Gloucester and thus there is no potential conflict of interest to consider.

11.6 British & Irish Lions

- a. The Lions squad was announced on 19 April and included 16 Englishmen, 12 Welshmen, 11 Irish and 3 Scottish. Sadly, Ben Youngs has subsequently withdrawn for personal reasons.
- b. The Lions have agreed in principle to reducing their tour length from ten matches to eight.

12. Financial Report

(Stephen Brown - Chief Officer of Business Operations)

- 12.1 Stephen Brown presented the 2016/17 third quarter financial results to Council.
- 12.2 Overall performance for Q3 is £2.5m adverse to budget, with a retained profit of £1.5m.
- 12.3 This result includes £2.9m additional cost uplift on the new players deal, which it was agreed by Board on the 28th September 2016, is to be funded from excess reserves carried forward from 2016 and not the operating budget for 2016/17.
- 12.4 The adjusted trading variance is therefore £0.4m favourable to budget.
- 12.5 Gross profit at £106m, is £1m (<1%) favourable due to winning the 6 Nations and from currency gain on euro denominated income, plus small revenue gains across boxes and the NFL game being offset by slight sponsorship shortfalls and increased match and event related costs, particularly for security.
- 12.6 Total overheads of £34.4m are £0.1m (<1%) adverse to budget.
- 12.7 Underlying Professional rugby investment is £1.2m adverse to budget largely due to unbudgeted 6 Nations Championship bonuses to players and coaches, excluding the uplift from the new deal.
- 12.8 Development investment is £0.4m (<2%) favourable to budget largely because of the Artificial Grass Pitches programme delays.
- 12.9 The drawdown of the RBS revolving credit facility remains at £25m. The cash balance at the end of March was £11m.

13. Professional Game Board Report (PGB)

(Jeff Blackett - Chairman of the Professional Game Board)

- 13.1 The PGB has met twice since the last Council meeting.
- 13.2 The role of the Championship will be a focus discussion for the PGB early next season.
- 13.3 The Rugby Players Association (RPA) reported their concerns about PRL's plans to extend the season by a month and the effect that this could have on player welfare.

- 13.4 A paper from Nigel Melville on the Player Welfare Project has been referred to the PGB Sports Science Sub Committee asking them to validate the data on "loading" on players to help inform the debate on player welfare.
- 13.5 The PGB has, in conjunction with Eddie Jones, conducted a review of England's performance in the Six Nations.
- 13.6 The first meeting of the new season will consider a report from the PGB Community Development Sub-Committee on their community work.
- 13.7 An off-site PGB meeting is being convened with the single agenda item being to consider how to improve the effectiveness of the PGB.
- 13.8 Adoption of the Sport England Governance Code will probably have an impact on the composition of the PGB.
- 13.9 The relationship between the RFU, PRL and the Clubs remains good.

14. Community Game Board Report (CGB)

(Malcolm Wharton - Chairman of the Community Game Board)

- 14.1 The CGB met on Thursday 1st June 2017 and discussed, inter alia, the 2017/18 KPIs, Age Grade Rugby, Payment of Players implementation, Disability Action Plan, Cross Pitch Sevens, GMS Action plan & Artificial Grass Pitches.
- 14.2 The annual meetings with CB Representatives continue. Discussions have been good and it is again proving to be a useful exercise. The Chairman has attended some of the meetings as have the Independent Non-Executive Directors.
- 14.3 The next stage of the National Rugby Survey is underway.
- 14.4 The Game Management System (GMS) is now a standing CGB agenda item. Regular reports will be received and reported on.
- 14.5 The fourth Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) is due for completion in early June (at Billingham RFC) and planning permission has been granted for a fifth (at Shelford RFC).
- 14.6 The Rugby Development Sub-Committee of the Professional Game Board has now met on three occasions and awards have been made to all fourteen Clubs.
- 14.7 NatWest Rugby Force takes place again over the weekend of 24th/25th June 2017.

15. Governance Standing Committee Report

(Angus Bujalski - Legal & Governance Director)

- 15.1 Work on finalising the Regulations for the 2017/18 season continues.
- 15.2 Governance has discussed the payment of players proposals, and will be working with the CGB around how this will be implemented.
- 15.3 Governance has discussed the structure of changes to the Rules to reflect the Governance Code, and will work over the summer to draft changes to the Rules to reflect principles agreed by Council. These will be put to the September Council meeting.
- 15.4 Governance has approved an application for Harlequin Ladies RFC to merge with Harlequin FC (the Premiership club). Harlequin FC's women's section will be one of the teams taking part in the new women's premier competition from 2017/18.

16. Any Other Business

- 16.1 The President reminded the meeting that that this was Jason Leonard's last Council meeting and acknowledged his large contribution to the Union. The President presented Jason Leonard with his Past President's badge.
- 16.2 The President presented Jim Coulson and Stuart Potts with their Privilege Member ties and badges and, as this was their last Council meeting, thanked them for their service to the Union.
- 16.3 The President also acknowledged the work done on behalf of the Union by David Ewing and Andrew Sarek, both of whom had left Council during the season.
- 16.4 The President also thanked Ian Ritchie for his work and congratulated him on his many achievements.
- 16.5 The Junior Vice President, Chris Kelly (in the absence of John Spencer, the Senior Vice President) and on behalf of the Council, thanked the President, Peter Baines, for his service during his year of office, for his numerous visits to Clubs up and down the country and congratulated him on the manner in which he chaired Council meetings.

The next Council meeting is on 29th September 2017 at Twickenham.

Chris Cuthbertson & Rob Udwin

5th June 2017

These notes are our personal recollections of the meeting and include those matters which we believe will be of interest to Middlesex Clubs. No attempt has been made to convey all the opinions expressed during the debates.

APPENDIX 1

2017/21 STRATEGIC PLAN

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

PROTECT	ENGAGE
Protecting everything that makes rugby in England so special	Engaging and inspiring new audiences, while developing deeper relationships with those already involved in the game
GROW	WIN
Providing more rugby through more opportunities for more people	Putting sustainable success at the heart of the professional game

The Strategic Priorities will be underpinned by the following ENABLERS		
INOVATION	PEOPLE	TECHNOLOGY
Developing a culture and environment that encourages innovation will enable us to be best in class	Being a sport renowned for its excellence, that embraces diversity and inclusion while attracting and developing talent	Using technology to leverage competitive advantage both on and off the field

All the above themes are expanded on in the Strategic Plan and are supported by measurable KPIs.

APPENDIX 2

SPORT ENGLAND GOVERNANCE CODE**PROPOSALS ADOPTED BY COUNCIL**

1. Acceptance of a target of a minimum of 30% females on the RFU Board by June 2020.
2. Governance Code Working Group becoming an implementation working group.
3. The setting up of a Diversity & Inclusion Working Group.
4. The RFU Board remaining at 14, to include three Independent Non-Executive Directors (subject to review in two years).
5. The Board approving the Strategic Plan and Annual Business Plan & Budget following formal consultation with Council.
6. The setting up of a Board Nominations Group, which will have the responsibility of making recommendations for all non-executive Board appointments (except for Directors without Portfolio, who shall be nominated by Council).
7. All non-executive Board appointment to be ratified by Council and put to the Annual General Meeting.
8. Council members being able to serve for a maximum of nine years. This can be extended for a maximum of a further three years if elected onto the presidential ladder, the Board or as a representative on an international body. However, the maximum term can Council member can serve will be 12 years.
9. The electing of Council members for terms of up to three years.
10. Council being able, subject to a two thirds majority, to remove any of the non-executive directors.
11. Council having the right to call a Special General Meeting and to comment (for inclusion in the calling papers) on any Special General Meeting called by the Board.
12. Council retaining the right to set Regulations and ticket policy.
13. That the term limits transition (for length of service for Council members) be completed within the nine years permitted by Sport England.

APPENDIX 3

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP 2017/18

Simon Collyer-Bristow

John Cunningham

David Ewing

Genevieve Glover (Independent)

Charlie McGinty

Andrew Shorney

APPENDIX 4.1

NOMINATIONS REPORT**COUNCIL MEMBERS ON COMMITTEES & SUB COMMITTEES****COMMUNITY GAME BOARD**

Robbie Briers (Chair),
 Malcolm Caird,
 Jim Chapman
 David Ewing
 Nigel Gillingham
 David Roberts
 Steven Pearson
 Mike Waplington

Rugby Growth Sub-Committee

Steven Pearson (Chair)
 Maggie Alphonsi
 Simon Collyer-Bristow
 James Cook
 Danny Hodgson
 Ian Metcalfe

Player Development Sub-Committee

David Ewing (Chair)
 Ted Atkinson
 Fred Batchelor
 Martin Corry

CB & Club Development Sub Committee

David Roberts (Chair)
 Ken Andrews
 Colin Baldwin
 Alan Butcher
 A Milliner
 Robin Wannop

Education & Age-Grade Sub Committee

Mike Waplington (Chair)
 Ken Andrews
 Phil Attwell
 Tracey Edmundson
 Deborah Griffin
 Geoff Simpson

Game Development Sub-Committee

Nigel Gillingham OBE (Chair)
 Simon Guy
 Andrew Shorney
 Keith Shurville
 Jonathan Webb

Competition Development Sub-Committee

Jim Chapman (Chair)
 Malcolm Caird
 Ron Jones
 David McAteer
 Tony Price
 John Rogers

GOVERNANCE STANDING COMMITTEE

CHRIS CUTHBERTSON (Chair)
 Fred Batchelor
 Peter Howard
 Nigel Gillingham
 Keith Shurville
 Jonathan Webb
 Peter Whiting,

Laws Sub-Committee

CHRIS CUTHBERTSON (Chair)
 Tim Miller
 Jonathan Webb

Schools & Youth Governance Sub-Committee

Fred Batchelor (Chair)
 Mike Cordell
 Tracey Edmundson
 Nigel Orton
 Ivor Smith

Adult Competition Management Sub-Committee

Keith Shurville (Chair)
 David McAteer
 Norman Robertson

APPENDIX 4.2

NOMINATIONS REPORT

RFU COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OTHER BODIES

England Rugby Football Schools' Union

Ken Andrews

Students Rugby Football Union

Danny Hodgson

Rugby Football Referees Union

Simon Collyer-Bristow

England Colleges Rugby Football Union

Jim Chapman

APPENDIX 5

WORLD RUGBY COUNCIL VOTE ALLOCATION

1 vote	Canada USA Romania Georgia
2 votes	Regional Associations x6 Japan
3 votes	Argentina Australia England France Ireland New Zealand Scotland South Africa Wales Italy
TOTAL	48

APPENDIX 6

RBS SIX NATIONS FIXTURES 2018 & 2019

2018 CHAMPIONSHIP	2019 CHAMPIONSHIP
<p>3rd/4th February 2018 Wales v Scotland, Saturday 2.15pm France v Ireland, Saturday 4.45pm Italy v England, Sunday 3.00pm</p>	<p>1st/2nd February 2019 France v Wales, Friday 8.00pm Scotland v Italy, Saturday 2.15pm Ireland v England, Saturday 4.45pm</p>
<p>10th/11th February 2018 Ireland v Italy, Saturday 2.15pm England v Wales, Saturday 4.45pm Scotland v France, Sunday 3.00pm</p>	<p>9th/10th February 2019 Scotland v Ireland, Saturday 2.15pm Italy v Wales, Saturday 4.45pm England v France, Sunday 3.00pm</p>
<p>23rd/24th February 2018 France v Italy, Friday 8.00pm* Ireland v Wales, Saturday 2.15pm Scotland v England, Saturday 4.45pm</p>	<p>23rd/24th February 2019 France v Scotland, Saturday 2.15pm Wales v England, Saturday 4.45pm Italy v Ireland, Sunday 3.00pm</p>
<p>10th/11th March 2018 Ireland v Scotland, Saturday 2.15pm France v England, Saturday 4.45pm Wales v Italy, Sunday 3.00pm</p>	<p>9th/10th March 2019 Scotland v Wales, Saturday 2.15pm England v Italy, Saturday 4.45pm Ireland v France, Sunday 3.00pm</p>
<p>17th March 2018 Italy v Scotland, Saturday 12.30pm England v Ireland, Saturday 2.45pm Wales v France, Saturday 5.00pm</p>	<p>16th March 2019 Italy v France, Saturday 12.30pm Wales v Ireland, Saturday 2.45pm England v Scotland, Saturday 5.00pm</p>

*Venue for this match will be announced at a later stage

All times are GMT