



RFL COMMUNITY BOARD CHAIR SUMMARY – 30th NOVEMBER 2022

Dear Community Game Colleagues,

I hope you enjoyed the Rugby League World Cup 2021 as much as I did and feel rightly proud of the part you have all played in helping our game produce such an incredible tournament. I especially enjoyed the PDRL and wheelchair tournaments, including the universal acclaim and admiration the latter achieved – very many new fans were inspired and engaged. And I'm sure you'll agree that the women's game is unrecognisable from even two years ago – a huge congratulations to the team and coaching staff. Well done to Jon Dutton, Chris Brindley and the whole RLWC2021 team. It's also worth a mention and a huge thank you and congratulations to the RFL team, many of whom were seconded to the tournament, provided magnificent support AND managed to keep their 'day job' going at the same time!

So, as always, to update you on the latest Community Board meeting: The first item on the agenda was a presentation from Liam Moore on the Match Official Strategy which included detail around the work we are doing to recruit more match officials. The referee societies provide an integral role in the recruitment and training of match officials. Disappointingly and linked to the Enjoy the Game campaign there is still a significant amount of match official abuse cases which needs to be seriously and urgently addressed and this will become an important part of the Community Board focus over the next year. Liam also provided the Board with an update on the introduction of HeadCams in the 2023 season. The Community Board thanked BARLA, National Conference League, Yorkshire Junior League, North West Youth League, North West Men's League and Yorkshire Men's League for contributing to the purchase of headcams which are already playing a part in the above.

Next on the agenda was Mr Lovering on how we have maximised the impact of the RLWC21. The Community Board is delighted with how the PDRL and Wheelchair teams were received and congratulated both teams on winning their respective World Cups. We have seen an increase in enquiries on how to get involved with Rugby League with spikes around Wheelchair RL matches. Mr Lovering also updated on the HerLegacy masterclasses which were taking place targeting girls inspired by the England Women's performances and similar 'turn up and play' sessions taking place throughout Wheelchair RL. Both the girls and wheelchair sessions were attended by England players.

Mr Lovering then provided an update on the Sport England reporting figures. Overall, the figures were at about at the same level as last year after the Covid pandemic. The mid-year reporting levels indicated last year's participation levels would be exceeded which proved not to be the case. Less players registered after the summer break than anticipated. There are some issues within the open age game (in common with other sports) that require further exploration/interventions together with some regional differences at younger age groups. The Community Board also noted that, with the conclusion of Sky Try, this has had an impact on transition rates within the core community. A more detailed update on the 2022 End of Year Reporting will be provided in the next Community Rugby League 'More than a Sport' update due in January 2023.

The Board then had a discussion around the makeup of the Community Board itself and what this should look like going forward to ensure we have alignment and representation to reflect the Community Game Strategy. This will be worked on during 2023 and any suggestions you may have would be welcome – please address these to kelly.barrett@rfl.uk.com.



Mrs Barrett then provided an update on Our League Active which has achieved all of its targets for its launch year and had a total of £6300 donations to the Community Game and more than 1000 people taking out membership who were not required to. The monies raised by this vital membership will ensure we can keep running and developing the Community Game for the sport and ensure our focus on developing offers such as PDRL, LDRL, wheelchair and the women's game can continue so a huge thank you to everyone.

On behalf of the RFL and the Community Board I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Best wishes and many thanks,

Sandy Lindsay MBE, Chair, RFL Community Board