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**MINUTES OF A CRICKET WALES BOARD MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 7TH DECEMBER 2017 AT THE SSE SWALEC**

**Present: Rod Jones(RJ) (Chair); Richard Penney(RP); Tony Moss(AM); Ann-Marie Smale(AMS); Jennifer Owen Adams(JOA); Hugh Morris(HM); Peter Hybart(PH) (CEO); Colin John(CJ); Jeff Bird(JRB);Huw Morgan(DHM); Tariq Awan(TA);Kerry Lloyd(KL); Mark Frost(MF); Tim Masters(TM)(ECB); Susie Osborne(SO)(Sport Wales);**

1. **Welcome and Apologies for absence:** Rod Joneswelcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received from Paul Miller and Ieuan Watkins.
2. **Moment of Reflection:** RJ asked the meeting for a moment of reflection following the recent death of Hugh Davies, former Chair of Cricket Wales and player/committee member of Glamorgan CCC.
3. **Declaration of Interests:**  As Board members of Glamorgan CCC (GCCC), Hugh Morris and Jeff Bird declared their interest in agenda item 6, The Pathway Review.
4. **Minutes:** The minutes of the October 1st Board meeting (distributed previously) were accepted as a true record and were signed accordingly by the Chair.
5. **Matters arising:**

**5.1** Sunday Casual Cricket: JRB distributed notes of a Cricket Wales Casual Cricket Working Group held on 5th October. In response to a question from AM, JRB explained that the Pilot Hubs described in the document would be made up of teams within a specific locality. These teams would not necessarily be cricket clubs, but may involve teams from rugby, football, companies or pubs within that locality. The Area Manager would need to select a Hub Coordinator and delegate responsibility to offer advice and guidance to these teams as to how the hub should operate. PH said the appointment of effective local Hub Co-ordinators was the key factor to the success of this initiative.

**Action: PH to progress appointment of Hub Co-ordinators with the Area Managers.**

**5.2**. County Partnership Agreement(CPA): RJ advised the meeting that representatives from the ECB had attended a meeting at SSE SWALEC with representatives of Cricket Wales and GCCC including himself, PH, HM JRB and MF. RJ explained that the informal meeting focused on the strengths and weaknesses, and the successes and failures of the current operation. ECB planned to attend similar meetings with all county boards, consolidate the views from these meetings and report back in the Spring of 2018, following an ECB Board meeting. ECB were also looking for strategic development plans with financials from its members demonstrating how the new money into the game would be utilised within their geographical area. A joint (CW/GCCC) Strategy Group would be formed to work on this (see later). The CPA would guide the future working relationships with the EBC and cricket in Wales.

1. **Pathway Review:**

**6.1.** Copies of a **financial analysis of the LTAD** had been circulated prior to the meeting. CJ advised the meeting that the Finance Sub-Committee had met immediately prior to this meeting and had agreed that, from a Cricket Wales point of view, the programme was financially viable with the first year project cost of £194k being less that the current Pathway budget of £206K. However, the projected figure was based on an annual average parental contribution of £600 which is significantly higher than the current average of £440. CJ explained that the increase was due entirely to the substantial increase in the volume of hours on the new programme, rather than the cost per hour. In order to reduce the financial burden on parents, the figures were recalculated capping the parental contribution to £530. This would increase the cost of the programme by £24k, a cost that would be borne by Cricket Wales. JOA commented that while the parental cost would increase, they would be getting a lot more for their money.

JOA asked whether we offer any bursaries or financial help for hardship cases. PH replied that, while we do not offer bursaries, we have provided assistance to those families with more than one child within the pathway if requested. However, in most instances parents are reluctant to admit to financial hardship. JOA said that she had experience in this area and would provide guidance to PH.

**Action: JOA to offer guidance to PH on overcoming financial hardship cases.**

HM advised that the average annual parental contribution amongst the other first class counties was £309, ranging from £215 to £505, meaning we would be running the most expensive pathway programme. PH asked whether HM had details of the number of hours involved in each of these programmes as he expected our programme would offer significantly more contact hours. HM replied that he did not, but it was not a good PR exercise irrespective of the number of hours. DHM suggested this depends on how the programme is marketed. AMS said that the current standard of coaching was not good enough and that if the quality of coaching was not going to improve, this would not provide value for money irrespective of the number of hours on offer. PH replied that if Cricket Wales was to retain control of the pathway, he intended to openly recruit the new coaching team.

RJ said that there were far more private schools in England providing high quality coaching as part of the curriculum which meant that the pathway had an even more important role in Wales. He queried whether this was the lowest parental contribution figure we could afford. PH replied that the figures had been based on the programme from the Pathway Working Party which included the U 17 Boys Age Group. PH said that, in his view, the U 17 Boys Age Group should come under the control of GCCC as part of the Academy set up. CJ confirmed that the figures were based on Cricket Wales providing the **whole** programme. RP said that we should sell the programme on a cost per hour basis highlighting the number of contact hours on offer.

JRB enquired as to whether we are aware of any child that has withdrawn from the pathway because of financial hardship? PH said that he was not aware of any such cases, but reiterated the fact that most parents would be reluctant to make such an admission.

**6.2**. PH had distributed a **Risk and Benefits** analysis covering both scenarios, with either Cricket Wales or GCCC leading the new Talent Centres and Age-Group programme. RJ asked for comments.

PH said that as far as he was concerned, the main issues centred on Sport Wales funding, North Wales, the Welsh brand and the need to future-proof the programme to withstand fundamental events such as HM leaving his post as Chief Executive of GCCC. He believed Cricket Wales was better placed to run long-term talent development programmes.

HM said that if GCCC led the programme, it has the knowledge and expertise, in the form of four Level 4 coaches, to improve cricket in Wales. It was not just about producing better players, but also ensuring the recreational game as a whole would improve in standard. As regards GCCC’s financial debt, HM confirmed that in recent years, this has been reduced from £17m to £6m and there are plans in place to reduce it further to £3m in the near future and to be debt-free by 2023. He acknowledged that cash-flow was an on-going issue but that it is planned to put proposals in place to be able to draw down £1.2m prior to receiving the ECB money in 2020.

On the question of the commitment to the Women & Girls game, he advised the meeting that GCCC was only the second first class county to invite girls into its Academy. He reiterated the fact that this side of the game was very close to his heart as he had lead the ECB Women & Girls programme for seven years.

In order to explain the direction the ECB was moving in as regards control of the pathway, HM said that, five years ago, only four first class counties had control of the Pathway. During that subsequent period, a further six counties had taken control of the Pathway and a further six counties were seeking to go that way. That would leave GCCC and Derbyshire CCC as the only two counties not in control of the pathway. HM explained that one of the sub-groups within the County Partnership Agreement was looking at the issue of the Pathway and he has been informed by people within the ECB that, within three years, the Pathway would reside with the first class counties. TM confirmed this direction of travel and added that he had heard that the future role of the Cricket Board was to be that of Participation. Therefore, he asked whether this debate could be delayed, in the light of a potential decision on the future of the Pathway by the ECB.

SO pointed out that Cricket Wales is itself, a National Governing Body (NGB) equivalent to the ECB in Wales and so it would be difficult for the ECB to dictate to Cricket Wales. HM said that the NGB for cricket in Wales is the England & Wales Cricket Board. SO pointed out that, UK Sport, Sport Wales and their respective governments recognise Cricket Wales as the NGB for cricket in Wales.

HM challenged the meeting to name an organisation that did not control its own Pathway. RJ questioned the purpose of the Pathway if 95% of players will not reach the standard required to play for GCCC. HM replied that, by raising the standard of cricket throughout the Pathway will improve the standard of that 95%. TM said that the on-going ECB review will define the purpose of the Pathway at each Age-group level. RJ said that if there is a proposed change in direction by the ECB, he would hope that this is communicated direct to Cricket Wales.

PH said that we have to make a decision based on many issues, because cricket in Wales is different to that in England. AMS replied that if we promote the fact that we are different from England, this could provide fuel for the National team debate.

In response to a question form AMS, PH said that discussions regarding control of the Pathway at the recent end of season review meeting indicated that the current Welsh coaches and managers did not have strong views either way. HM argued that both Mark Walton and Aimee Rees had recommended that control of the Pathway be moved to GCCC. PH agreed, but pointed out that this recommendation had been made entirely from a technical viewpoint, and both Mark and Aimee understood the broader issues that now needed to be considered.

DHM said that he has serious concerns about the possible loss of £150k from Sport Wales should control of the Pathway pass to GCCC. He was of the opinion that, until we receive a decision from Sport Wales, it is difficult for this Board to make its own decision. HM replied that that is a conversation that needs to take place with Sport Wales. SO commented that Sport Wales can invest in any type of organisation, but it would need certain assurances and would need to consider the impact of investing in a professional body with debt. HM made the point that if GCCC did not gain control of the Pathway, the ECB may decide to withhold a significantly greater amount of money than the £150k on offer from Sport Wales.

RJ said that the debate had previously reached an impasse (confirmed by today’s discussion) and had therefore decided to put forward a possible compromise solution. He apologised to the meeting for not giving prior notice of this proposal. Prior to this meeting, he had only discussed the option with HM, PH, JRB and CJ using the WCSG to do so, which also included Barry O’Brien (Chair GCCC). RJ explained the proposed alternative solution as follows:

* GCCC to take charge of the U17 Boys Age Group.
* The current GCCC Head of Talent Development to be responsible for the entire Pathway and report to PH up to U15 and HM from U16 upwards. Cricket Wales and GCCC to share the salary of the Head of Talent Development. HM had expressed concern over the HR implications and so, a 1 or 2 year secondment had been suggested.
* A light-touch governance from both organisations over the designated Age Groups, keeping an open dialogue for developments in the future.

RJ stated that the aim of this proposal was to address GCCC concerns over continuity throughout the process. Through this proposal, Cricket Wales were offering GCCC far more influence /control than is currently the case and the fact that Cricket Wales was prepared to accept the current GCCC Head of Talent Development to run the entire programme on a seconded basis was a very significant and genuine effort to seek a solution acceptable to both sides. At the same time, it would protect the “Wales” brand in junior cricket and offer our young players across the nation the opportunity of representing their country. PH commented that we are in a period of uncertainty and so a secondment will buy us some time, as well as giving us a degree of flexibility. JOA felt that this was a good compromise and would support it. TM said that the proposal had merit and could help both sides. HM said that it solves a problem for Cricket Wales in not having to appoint a Performance Manager, but it causes a problem for GCCC as it loses 50% of its Head of Talent Development’s time. RJ replied that he could not see a difference with the current Head of Talent Development running 100% of the pathway for GCCC (which GCCC itself had said would be the case) as opposed to splitting his time 50 /50 between GCCC and Cricket Wales.

HM said that, with regards to TM’s earlier comment about an ECB decision on the Pathway in the not too distant future, why don’t we wait until that ECB decision is forthcoming rather than make a decision in haste? RJ disagreed, saying that to date, both organisations had enjoyed a harmonious relationship and there was no reason to believe that this would not continue in order to make this compromise solution work.

6.3. RJ, as Chair, said that the meeting had heard both sets of views and should now go to a **vote** on the following proposal:

* Should the Pathway remain with Cricket Wales or be passed to GCCC?
* If remaining with Cricket Wales, the compromise option involving sharing the Head of Talent Development would remain open to be discussed at the Glamorgan Committee next week.

RJ advised HG and JRB that it was their decision whether or not they wished to exercise their right to vote having declared an interest in the item. The result of the vote was as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pathway to remain with Cricket Wales | 8 Votes |
| Pathway to pass to GCCC | 3 votes |
| Abstentions | 0 Votes |

As a result of this vote, the compromise proposal would be put to the Glamorgan Committee. The Board delegated authority to the Chair to continue negotiations with GCCC or progress with recruiting a Performance Manager if the proposal was rejected by GCCC.

1. **Operational Plan:** PH & MF had distributed a document detailing the progress of the Cricket Wales Operational Plan for the period October 2016 to September 2017 and the plans for the 2018 season. The report was summarised under the following categories:

* Development
* Performance
* Strategic
* Governance
* Joint Working between Cricket Wales and GCCC

The Board supported the season 2017 review and plans for 2018 noting the on-going challenge of measuring outcomes.

1. **A vision for Sport in Wales and a Sport Wales Strategy:** SO advised the meeting that Sport Wales had engaged the services of a specialist company to carry out a survey to determine what people think the vision for sport in Wales should be. The information will be collected on-line and via engagement days (dates to be confirmed). It is planned that the work will be finalised by June 2018. PH stressed the importance of this work for the future of all sport in Wales.

**Action: All Directors to attend their local engagement day.**

1. **Joint Cricket Wales / Glamorgan Strategy:** PH distributed a document which detailed the joint Cricket in Wales Strategic Plan for the period January 2018 to December 2024. PH explained that this document will be used to form part of the bid by GCCC for High Value matches during that period. PH said that, while the document in its current form was sufficient for the bid process, it will need more input from Cricket Wales to make it a complete strategic document representing both organisations. In the New Year, PH and HM have agreed to put together a working party consisting of five individuals from each organisation to produce a new joint vision and strategy.

**Action: RJ and PH to finalise Cricket Wales representatives (x5).**

1. **Financial Update:** CJ presented the six month accounts to 30th September 2017. He highlighted an over-spend in the running of the Age Groups and a saving in salaries due to the Performance Manager vacancy. PH said that the over-spend was an indirect consequence of the Performance Manager vacancy. In summary, CJ reported that the figures were in line with budget and he expected this trend to continue through to the year-end in March 2018.

CJ advised the meeting that he intended to put the annual audit contract out to tender, inviting the existing company, Clifton House Partnership, plus three other companies to submit tenders.

CJ reported that the Finance Sub-Committee had been presented with a proposal he had requested from the insurance broker Thomas Carroll for Critical Illness cover for certain members of staff. CJ said that, while such cover is good practice, we will have to consider whether we can afford such expenditure when the 18/19 budget is finalised.

1. **Child Welfare Update:** Due to the absence of Ieuan Watkins, there was no Child Welfare update for this meeting. However, PH reported that all matters were being well handled.
2. **Board Sub-Committee and Membership:** PH distributed a document detailing the current Sub-Committee involvement for the Cricket Wales Directors. RJ said that while a number of Board members are involved in various Sub-Committees, if anyone feels they believe we can do things better, they should include this in their Board Evaluation process.

RJ asked PH if he needed any assistance in any particular area. PH replied that the issue of sponsorship needed more dedicated time and expertise. DHM has significant experience in this area and said that he would be happy to work with Cricket Wales and GCCC in seeking out new sources of funding. RJ thanked DHM for his offer and said that PH and DHM should formalise a plan for the future.

**Action: PH to arrange discussion with DHM with regards to potential new sponsorship agreements.**

1. **Dates of 2018 Meetings**
   1. 10.30am Friday 2nd March
   2. 3.30pm Thurs 17th May
   3. 3.30pm Thurs 12th July
   4. 10.30am Mon 3rd September
   5. AGM etc Sunday 30th September
   6. 10.30am Thurs 6th December

**Any Other Business:** JOA advised the meeting that she had been invited to sit on the ECB’s Participation and Growth Committee. The first meeting is at Lords on 22nd January 2018.

Directors were reminded to complete and return the Board Self Evaluation questionnaire

**The meeting closed at 12-50pm**

SIGNED: ……………………………………………………………………………………….. Date:……………………………………………………..