



#### Item 4

### MINUTES OF A CRICKET WALES BOARD MEETING HELD AT 11.00am ON TUESDAY 31<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2021

#### BY TELECONFERENCE

**Present:** Rod Jones (RJ) (Chair); Leshia Hawkins (CEO); Colin John (CJ); Jennifer Owen Adams (JOA); Gareth Lanagan (GL); Richard Penney (RP); Kerry Lloyd (KL); Sue Phelps (SP); Mark Frost (MF); Matt Thompson (MT); Ieuan Watkins (IW);

**Huw Morgan (DHM) joined the meeting at 11-25am**

1. **Welcome from Chair:** RJ welcomed all to the meeting. He also requested a moment of reflection to note the recent death of our fellow Board member Jeff Bird, and local Welsh cricketer Maqsood Anwar.
2. **Apologies for absence:** Hugh Morris (HM); Sian Williams (SW); Tony Moss (TM); Sohail Rauf (SR); Rebecca Rothwell (RR).
3. **Declaration of Interests:** SP declared that she was a candidate for one of the NED positions.
4. **Approve minutes of Previous meeting:** The minutes of the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021 Board meeting (distributed previously) were accepted as a true record and were signed accordingly by the Chair.
5. **Matters Arising:**
  - 5.1. **Cross-Border Club safeguarding Issue:** IW said that this issue will take longer to resolve than was initially thought and should therefore come off the agenda but remain as a "need to do item".
  - 5.2. **North Wales Cross-Border Clubs:** LH said that it was hard to say if any of these clubs will come back into Welsh cricket leagues. There are still on-going local discussions, but this was not a matter for this Board. GL added that there was a similar issue involving some clubs in Mid Wales such as Newtown and Llanidloes.
6. **Chair's Report:**
  - 6.1. RJ said that he had nothing of note to report on any ECB activity.
  - 6.2. RJ reflected on the season by saying how easy it is to forget how uncertain the situation was in March / April time and so what has been achieved with regards to All Stars, Dynamos and the Pathway is a credit to all our staff and volunteers. On behalf of the Board, RJ thanked all those involved.
7. **CEO's Report:** Prior to the meeting, LH distributed a copy of her CEO report and discussed the main points as follows:

**7.1.** LH reiterated RJ's comments regarding the performance of our staff and volunteers and congratulated all concerned on their achievements and noted Glamorgan's recent triumph in the Royal London Cup, with both a Welsh captain and man of the match. With regards the staff, LH said that she had at last had the opportunity to meet the majority of the staff all together at the recent Welsh Fire fixture at the Sophia Gardens Stadium and had enjoyed it immensely.

**7.2.** LH advised the meeting that the ECB are planning to host their Board meeting in Cardiff, postponed from 2020, over 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> September 2021. They have invited Glamorgan & Cricket Wales (LH and HM) to present for an hour on the morning of 8<sup>th</sup> September.

**7.3.** With regards our digital performance LH reported that we now have almost 7,000 followers which is a significant increase on the figure reported at the last meeting. However, LH felt that we are still under-using the website in terms of circulating / signposting information, especially to free up Area Manager time, which we are discussing actively at Senior Exec level.

**7.4.** LH said that she was looking forward to attending the Welsh Cup Final between Newport CC and Swansea CC at Pontarddulais on September 5<sup>th</sup>.

**8. Safeguarding Report:** Prior to the meeting IW distributed a copy of his Safeguarding Report.

**8.1. Minimum Standards 2022:**

**8.1.1.** IW explained that the ECB had set a deadline for all Club Mark clubs in Wales to achieve 100% compliance with SHMS for the end of July 2021. This has been a necessary, but challenging process which has required significant resourcing from both the staff and voluntary workforce. Most clubs have achieved standards, although some will be going through an appeal process to retain their Club Mark status. Club Mark clubs make up 50% of our network, with the remainder due to 'onboard' shortly we now have a clear indication as to the significant amount of work necessary to support clubs to achieve compliance.

**8.1.2.** Pro-active plans have been undertaken to speak with League Executives across all senior leagues to devise a minimum standards template. The creation of a Safeguarding Improvement Notice (SIN) with a tiered approach for penalising clubs who fail to achieve basic standards of safeguarding created and agreed across Wales, (to be clear, the aim remains at 100% compliance, 0% sanctions). IW explained (and LH reinforced) that there is still the absolute intention to implement and enforce minimum standards, however that process requires SHMS data and staffing resource to supply data to clubs and leagues.

**8.1.3.** With the staffing team heavily invested in resourcing the onboarding of the remaining 50% of clubs, there is insufficient Executive resource to provide the necessary administrative support to robustly implement the 'line in the sand' expectations that the Board have requested. Access to SHMS has been sought for League Safeguarding Officers that would help alleviate the resource impact, but not granted by the ECB due to data protection/security issues.

**8.1.4.** IW will meet with LH in the next few weeks to determine best options to drive change, but he explained to Board that it would be counterproductive to introduce minimum standards that could not be researched/resourced operationally. SHMS is being developed and will provide what is needed, however as it stands, we do not have the resource needed to achieve the ubiquitous cultural change we desire.

**8.1.5.** IW thanked the Safeguarding Council and in particular the Senior Leagues. Achieving in a short period a unified approach to such standards is quite remarkable. We will still make some changes and continue to drive compliance for 2022, but we will have to be proportionate to what can be effectively implemented with available systems and resources. **ACTION IW/LH.**

## **8.2. Cross Border Clubs:**

**8.2.1.** IW advised that 14 clubs have been identified as residing within Wales but playing cricket in English leagues. Cricket Wales hold safeguarding responsibility for these clubs, yet without League SO oversight, compliance remains somewhat anonymous and reliant on the leagues they engage with. Attempts to engage with the 14 clubs has proved minimally successful with just 4 of 14 attending a long-planned meeting around expectations and support. This will require a broader piece of work involving three other County Boards and directed work to achieve compliance, particularly as our 2022 minimum standards is still to be decided.

## **8.3. Case Management:**

**8.3.1.** IW said that a rise in cases has been experienced since the last Board meeting in May 2021 with several individuals remaining or recently suspended for safeguarding purposes. The Board were provided with a limited and anonymised overview. IW explained that the majority of cases related to issues outside of the cricket arena, i.e., individual behaviours/convictions elsewhere identifying safeguarding risk requiring assessment within cricket. Structure and processes are strong and robust with ECB management/oversight of all cases.

**9. Finance:** Prior to the meeting, CJ distributed a copy of the draft accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 in addition to the Audit Report and Letter of Representation.

**9.1.** CJ provided a brief summary of the Audit Report highlighting a few minor adjustments requested by the Auditors. In response to an audit recommendation, LH and CJ agreed to put together a Fixed Assets Capitalisation Policy to present to the next Finance Committee. **(ACTION LH&CJ)**

**9.2.** With regards to the Draft Accounts, CJ said that the final figures were in line with the draft accounts presented to the previous meeting subject to the minor amendments. CJ advised that the Auditors had requested a section be included explaining how the pandemic has impacted on Cricket Wales. LH agreed to provide this report. **ACTION LH**

**9.3.** RJ thanked CJ, KL and LH for their work in producing the final financial statements.

## **10. Board Governance:**

**10.1. Nominations Committee Recommendation for Chair:** RP commenced by thanking the Nominations Committee for their efforts throughout the recruitment process. Prior to the meeting, RP had distributed a paper which explained the process followed by the Nominations Committee to select their AGM recommendation for the position of Independent Chair of Cricket Wales. The successful candidate was Jennifer Owen Adams. Following some discussion, RJ, on behalf of the Board, confirmed support for JOA's nomination to the AGM in October.

## **10.2. Non-Executive Director (NED) Recruitment:**

**10.2.1.** RP advised the meeting that there had been a very good response for these positions and following deliberations, 10 applicants had been put forward for interview. 8 interviews had already been carried out with the remaining 2 applicants being interviewed next week. RP said that he seeks Board guidance on two issues:

1. If On the assumption that JOA moves to the position of Chair, do we require does she lose her position as an Independent Director?

LH recommended that GovComm minutes were consulted but said that the intention of the Article amends approved at the EGM was to achieve parity of Independent & Recreational Game representation – ie- for the Board composition to be 5 Recreational and 4 Independent Directors & 1 Independent Chair, plus CEO, Finance Director and a Glamorgan representative (who hold neither an Independent Director nor Recreational Game title). Currently the Chair is a Recreational Game Director.

Following further discussion, RJ agreed to speak to TM (Chair of GovComm) to clarify the position and circulate details of this discussion to the Board. **(ACTION RJ)**

2. RP said that our ECB Representative Andy Fairburn had made comments relating to ECB Governance recommendations relating to the director recruitment process. RP said that the process would be continued to be reviewed over the next few recruitment cycles. However, RP said that as we were a National Governing body and not just a County Board, he felt that we should not necessarily be subject to the same standards.

**10.3. AGM Business:** LH said that the proposed date for the AGM was 14<sup>th</sup> October subject to all nominations business being completed. RP said he was quietly confident that the Nominations Committee will have the NED nominations by the 8<sup>th</sup> September which would then require a short-notice Board meeting to confirm these nominations prior to the AGM.

## **11. ECB and Strategy:**

**11.1. ECB CPA Update:** LH advised the meeting that herself, Matt Thompson, Hugh Morris and Dan Cherry had attended a meeting with ECB representatives. LH said that we had received very positive feedback from ECB regarding the quality of our presentation and our progress in a number of areas, including collaborative working between the two organisations.

**11.2. CPA County Board Contract:** Prior to the meeting LH had distributed a copy of the CPA County Board Contract for approval. The contract was approved.

## **12. Participation and Performance:** Prior to the meeting, MF and MT had distributed papers for information and discussion. The main points of discussion were:

### **12.1. Participation Update:**

**12.1.1.** MF informed the meeting that Lord Taverners had offered us funding for the “Super 1’s” programme which he hoped would provide three new part-time roles.

**12.1.2.** MF reported that although we were 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> respectively in the County league tables for All Stars and Dynamos, there was still room for further growth. There were still some clubs without any female All Stars. However, MF said that the ambition for future growth was achievable, in particular to grow low/medium clubs to the achievable standards set by higher performing clubs, but it was important we manage that ambition in conjunction with SHMS and the challenges of servicing greater candidate growth numbers in workforce training to under pin this demand.

**12.1.3.** GL asked whether there was concern over the number of concessions / drop-outs in the senior game this season. MF said that it was important we have all the facts relating to these concessions and that should become clear in the forthcoming Club Audit and also PlayCricket data which is becoming

available. RJ commented that a recent review within SEWCL had found that some 40-50 clubs had been lost within SE Wales over the past 20 years with the vast majority away from the “M4 corridor”.

**12.1.4.** GL said that to maintain the growth in the girls’ game, we need more role models. MF agreed saying that we need to attract more adult women to take coaching sessions and that the workforce training numbers are being monitored by gender.

**12.2. Performance and Pathway Update:** MT said that from a general Pathway point of view, the season has been a great success. Similarly, Wales National Counties team exceeded expectations in getting to its’ first semi-final. It is important we build on these successes.

**12.2.1. Regional Cricket:** MT said there was an over-riding sense of achievement amongst the Regions. MT said that there had been some gaps in performance standards which will provide something to work on next season. The measure of the success was reflected in the good representation in the Welsh Age Group Squads.

**12.2.2.** RJ asked whether MT was comfortable with the Pathway Agreement with Glamorgan CC? MT said that he was, but still thought that certain lines of communication could be improved on certain matters.

**12.2.3.** GL raised the question of travel issues for fixtures between North and South teams. MT said that this was an on-going problem and he intended to survey North Wales parents on this issue. He was of the opinion that there was an appetite amongst the North Wales teams to continue to travel to the South for fixtures but, more thought was needed. MT said that there was always the option of increasing the number of fixtures with English Border clubs and reduce those with South Wales based teams.

**12.3. Innovation Groups Proposal:** Prior to the meeting, MF distributed a copy of a paper for discussion and approval.

**12.3.1.** MF said that recently the Junior Council voted to disband itself at the last AGM and the Cricket Wales Board recently approved a refresh of what was formerly known as the Senior Council, with a view to creating new ‘innovation groups’. MF asked for any questions regarding these new groups.

**12.3.2.** IW raised the issue of the “voice of the child” and could we consider having a sub-committee made up of children to feed into these groups. RP said that we could even consider a Junior Board. JOA said that this was a great initiative and ideas should be sought as to how we can make it happen? SP suggested inviting youngsters onto the EDI committees. **(ACTION SP & EDI Committee)**

**12.3.3.** GL said that although the Mid Wales region did not have a Junior League set up, it was important it was not excluded from these new Innovation Groups.

### **13. Working with Glamorgan:**

**13.1.** LH gave a brief update on progress to date including the KPI Tracker as submitted to the ECB for the CPA Interim Review meeting.

### **14. Managing Risk:** LH advised that she had completed the re-vamp of the Risk Register (as distributed prior to the meeting).

**14.1.** LH said that from a finance viewpoint, we can expect a bumpy ride due to changes to the Sports Wales funding model which, from a performance point of view, favours Olympic and Commonwealth Games individual sports over team sports, especially those which have limited or no Multi-Games even exposure. LH said that the impact of the Schools Survey will not be known until October 2022, but she was hopeful that the impact of the Allstars / Dynamos programmes and the success of The Hundred tournament will improve the outlook.

**14.2.** With regards to the provision and quality of cricket facilities, LH said she was confident that we can control the risk. However, more work is required throughout the Welsh sports industry to improve current procedures and to increase collaboration between local authorities and major pitch sports.

**14.3.** LH said she is waiting for news from the ECB on its' plans for Secondary School Girls' initiatives.

**14.4.** With regards to Welsh Rugby, RJ/LH said that it was now important that we re-engage in discussions to minimise the impact of competing for players and facilities.

**15. Policies and Administration:**

**15.1. Lone / Home & Flexible Working Policy:** Prior to the meeting LH distributed a copy of the proposed policy document. RJ said that unless there were any further comments, the policy should be approved. The meeting approved the policy.

**16. Sport Wales Update:** On behalf of RR, LH gave a brief update.

**16.1.** LH advised the meeting that Sport Wales staff had now returned to the office base on a one day a week basis which will be reviewed again in November 2021.

**16.2. Tackling Racism and Racial Inequalities in Sport Review:**

23 June saw the release of findings from the UK-wide Tackling Racism and Racial Inequalities in Sport Review. They can be found [here](#).

The Sport Wales response to the findings and what they mean for Wales can be viewed [here](#)

LH said that colleagues are welcome to get in touch with RR to discuss these findings, or if you have any concerns, questions or suggestions.

**17. Groups and Councils Minutes:** The following minutes had been distributed for information:

**17.1.** Facilities Group minutes

**17.2.** Nominations Committee minutes

**18. AOB:**

**18.1.** GL commented that the recent award of a £2m bonus to the hierarchy at the ECB did little to avoid the perception that cricket is an elitist sport and raised the question as to whether we should send any feedback to the ECB on this issue. LH and JOA agreed to discuss off-line as to the best course of action, in terms of both whether to feed back formally, and the timing and form of any follow up. **(ACTION JOA/LH)**

**18.2.** RJ said that as this was his last Board meeting after 6 years in post (5yrs as Chair) he commented on the immense progress that has been made by Cricket Wales during that period and the formidable challenges still facing the organisation. He expressed his thanks to LH and all Board members as well as Peter Hybart for their support during his tenure. JOA responded by saying it was a shame that we can not thank you in person for the great legacy you have left following your very transformative period as Chair.

**The meeting closed at 1-25pm**

SIGNED:

Date:

**Chair Cricket Wales**