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**MINUTES OF A CRICKET WALES BOARD MEETING HELD AT 10.30am ON THURSDAY 3RD DECEMBER 2020**

**BY TELECONFERENCE**

**Present: Rod Jones (RJ) (Chair); Tony Moss (AM); Leshia Hawkins (CEO); Hugh Morris (HM);Colin John (CJ); Huw Morgan (HDM); Richard Penney (RP); Jeff Bird (JRB); Sian Webber (SW); 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); Rebecca Rothwell (RR); Sohail Rauf (SR);**

1. **Welcome from Chair:** RJ welcomed all and in particular, Sohail Rauf (SR) who was attending his first Cricket Wales Board Meeting. SR responded by thanking the Chair for his kind welcome and that he was looking forward to contributing to discussions and decision making during his tenure at Cricket Wales.
2. **Apologies for absence:**  Apologies for absence were received from Jeff Bird.
3. **Declaration of Interests:** None. KL advised the Chair that there were still 2 DOI forms to be returned.
4. **Approve minutes of Previous meeting:** The minutes of the 20th October 2020 Board meeting (distributed previously) were accepted as a true record and were signed accordingly by the Chair.
5. **Matters Arising:** RJ confirmed that most of the matters listed on the agenda would be discussed under other agenda items in this meeting apart from the following:

**5.1. Glamorgan Representation on CW Board**: RJ advised the meeting that he had been in discussions with the Glamorgan Chair and this issue is to be on the agenda of the next Glamorgan Board meeting to be held next week.

**5.2. Risk Register:** In response to a point raised by GL, LH said that trying to maintain two Risk Register documents was a concern, so as a compromise, any Board member who wished to view the Register at any time should contact either LH or KL. Furthermore, the Register will, in future be presented at every Board meeting. LH said that, moving forwards, she was considering putting the Board Papers on Sharepoint via Teams. GL agreed that Teams would be the most viable solution.

**5.3. Brand Refresh:** MT confirmed that, following GL’s suggestion at the previous meeting, the logo now has the Cricket Wales name in Welsh on top of the English text and will be released in January.

1. **Safeguarding:** Prior to the meeting, IW distributed copies of his Safeguarding Report in addition to a SHMS Portal Update and Compliance Objectives.

**6.1.** IW focussed on the Board paper titled “Safeguarding in Welsh Cricket 2021 and Beyond”. He explained that there is an absolute want and need to press on with safeguarding developments across Welsh Cricket.  Significant progress has been made, but coach compliance, owing to poor visibilty (in ECB systems) of certain elements, remained an issue and one which was a significant risk for clubs and for Cricket Wales.  The new Safe Hands Management System (SHMS) will in time show safeguarding compliance for all roles within cricket, but that is not likely to display coach data until Q3/4 of 2021 or beyond.

**6.2.** IW said that we are faced with either designing our own system until the ECB system comes up to speed, or we stand still.  Neither is an attractive option.  Instead, we will mandate what will be Cricket Wales expectations for the 2022 season and publicly and loudly release those expectations in early January 2022.  This mandate will be a clear line in the sand regarding what we as a Board demand operationally at clubs.  Once SHMS is up to speed, we will introduce Club Improvement Notices and a clear system of sanctions, where absolutely necessary, including potentially removal of affiliation as an absolute last resort.  Alongside, we will use the system to identify gaps in advance and provide local/regional training opportunities – every individual and club will have the opportunity to become fully compliant.

**6.3.** In response to a question from JOA, IW explained that safeguarding expectations have been in place for 15 years. Coaches are the individuals with the most contact with our children and yet with current systems, individuals may be in place without qualifications and appropriate vetting – this is not acceptable, and we must push for change.  There is an acceptance of the need for safeguarding within cricket and momentum in its delivery, this is very much an opportunity to make real and decisive change.

**6.4.** Following further discussion, all the recommendations with regards to future approach on this matter were accepted.

**6.5. Welfare Support Proposal (EAP for volunteers):**

**6.5.1.** LH distributed a paper which proposed that Cricket Wales continue to offer the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) to:

* All Affiliated Club Welfare Officers (approx. 180 people)
* All League Welfare Officers (if they are not already a CWO)
* Our Disability performance team members and staff

Currently, this facility is provided free of charge to paid members of staff by The ECB via an organisation called Validium. LH said she has received a quote from another provider, CareFirst which is almost half of the cost of that of Validium to cover volunteers in addition to the Validium cover for paid staff. The quoted figure is £1300pa, although there are cheaper options for a reduced service.

**6.5.2.** LH explained that the personnel listed above can face very difficult and disturbing situations in their voluntary roles and at the moment have no offer of support to help deal with these situations.

**6.5.3.** Following discussion, the meeting agreed to adopt the full policy.

1. **Chair’s Report:**

**7.1**. RJ informed the meeting that last week he had attended a very positive meeting of the Welsh Cricket Steering Group (WCSG) aimed at forging closer links between the two organisations.

**7.2.** RJ thanked everyone for completing the Skills Matrix. It was now his intention to follow up with a meeting with each individual Board member.

**7.3.** RJ advised that staff appraisals were currently on-going. When we are back to some semblance of normality, RJ said that it was his intention to invite members of the Senior Management Team to periodically attend these meetings to ensure the Board remains as visible as possible.

**7.4.** Last week, RJ attended a meeting at the ECB and was concerned with the lack of progress made in a number of areas. Almost half of the County Boards have yet to meet with the ECB and so there is a lot of work needed to put the County Partnership Agreement in place.

1. **CEO’s Report:** LH gave a verbalsummary of the salient points of her report distributed prior to the meeting.

**8.1.** LH also advised the meeting that the previous evening she had received the last draft of the latest re-issue of the Indoor Guidance and will provide an update to all interested parties asap. **(LH to Action)**

**8.2.** LH emphasised that the message we need to convey to the cricket fraternity is that Cricket Wales is open for business as normal for next season. HM agreed but from a Glamorgan CC perspective it was very difficult to make any plans given the uncertainty surrounding the level of crowd capacity allowed into the stadium next season. There are currently different rules for England and Wales which is providing an unfair playing field for our Rugby and Football teams. HM said that if this situation continues into the cricket season it will have serious ramifications both on and off the field. Glamorgan CC together with Cardiff City FC and Swansea City FC have been lobbying Welsh Government over this issue.

1. **Finance:**

**9.1.** CJ advised the meeting that the Finance Committee had met last week. It was presented with the first draft budget. CJ said that there was still significant uncertainty regarding income levels for next year as well as issues surrounding unused funds from this financial year. A final budget will be presented to the February Board meeting.

**9.2.** CJ reported that he, along with RJ and LH had attended a meeting with Sport Wales to review the basis of funding going forward. HM asked whether we now have any clarity as to the timescale for confirmation of the level of funding from Sport Wales. LH replied that we will not know the exact figure until late October 2022. However, over the next few months, we will hopefully have a better idea as to what pots of funding we will have access to. JOA said that, given the uncertainty surrounding our funding partners, are there any plans for more diversity for our funding streams such as sponsorship. CJ replied that we are looking at ways of obtaining more private funding, but obviously this is very difficult in the current economic climate. LH said that it was definitely our intention to work closely with Glamorgan CC to try and secure more sponsorship money.

**9.3.** SP said that given the availability of Government Covid Recovery Funding, should we consider this as a possible source of funds for specific activities, for example EDI projects? JOA agreed and said that this was an area we should consider.

**9.4. Reserves Policy:** CJ confirmed that the Finance Committee now has the authority to access the reserve fund based on agreed calculation. The amount of any withdrawal of funds would depend on the outcome of the annual budget exercise.

**9.5. Staff Health Policies:** CJ advised the meeting that all the insurance policies were close to completion and soon to come into force.

**9.6**. **Staff Reward:** CJ advised the meeting that the Finance Committee had approved recommendations put forward for a Christmas Bonus for certain members of staff.

1. **Governance:** Prior to the meetingLH distributed a copy of the draft minutes of the recent Governance Sub-Committee (GovComm) and reported on the following agenda items:

**10.1. Director Terms:** The meeting recommended that the position of Finance Director should be time limited to 3 x 3 year terms, similar to all other director roles within Cricket Wales. The meeting approved this recommendation.

**10.2. Board Balance and Representation:** LH said that the recommendation by GovComm was to try and achieve parity between the number of Recreational and Independent Directors. RJ said that, in principle we are happy to have less reliance on the recreational representation. The Committee agreed the ideal position would be for Glamorgan’s representation on the Cricket Wales Board would be in parity to that afforded to CW on the Glamorgan Board. RJ said that we need to await a response from Glamorgan CC before the final recommendation is brought before the February Board meeting.

**10.3. AGM Voting Proportions:** LH reported that GovComm recommended that the Executive undertake an exercise to capture Junior League governance data and structures, with a view to a proposal to come back to GovComm in February.

**10.4. Senior Council:** LH saidthat GovComm had agreed there was a need to have a forum to discuss matters affecting leagues and adult participation as a whole, but the current set up lacked a specific purpose. The Committee recommended that a group with clear remit, purpose and objectives should be created and also suggested a name change may be beneficial. Therefore, the Board are recommended to direct the Executive to draft a review and proposal for consideration at the February GovComm and subsequently Board with regards to Sub-Board Participation Councils, Area Boards and other Groups with regards to their Purpose and Remit, Membership and Governance, Frequency of Meetings, Objectives and Brand. The meeting approved this recommendation.

**10.5. Board Sub Committees:** LH advised the meeting that GovComm would like the Board to consider the creation of a formal Nominations Committee and further direct GovComm on its potential input into sub-committee governance and participation. RJ said that this issue required further discussion and asked RR to report back with examples of such structures in other sports. **(RR to Action)**

1. **Company Policies:**  Prior to the meeting LH distributed a copy of the following policy for approval:

**11.1. Vexatious Complaints/ Harassment Policy:** LH advised the meeting that there was a need for such a policy to protect our staff and the Company name. Following discussion, the meeting unanimously agreed that the policy should be implemented.

1. **EDI Group Update:**

**12.1.** Prior to the meeting, the Board had been given a copy of the minutes of the EDI meeting held on 5th November. JOA said that it was imperative that the work of the EDI Group is embedded throughout the Joint Strategy rather than just be a silo’d part of it.

**12.2.** A significant discussion was held about the issues raised by the ‘Black Lives Matter’ protests of this summer. JOA said that the meeting acknowledged the fact that we lack expertise in this area, but that was not reason to ignore the issue. The meeting re-emphasised our commitment to greater understand these issues and champion the cause of diversity and racism. This must involve better training at both Board and staff levels. MF gave an update on the great work Glamorgan CC are doing in this area and how both organisations are keen to work together with a joint plan to tackle these issues. LH said that this issue was also very high on the ECB’s agenda. RJ said that he was keen to move forward with our work in this area changing our words into actions.

1. **Club Support/Participation:** Prior to the meeting, MF distributed a number of papers for discussion and/or information.

**13.1**. **Affiliation Proposal 2021:** MF said that there was a need for change in the Affiliation Policy based upon the service provided and its value. The paper explained that it was now appropriate to have a two-tier system. The Board was asked to consider and approve the recommended proposal of an increase and two-tier simple system, at the costs given. Approval was duly given.

**13.2. Grants Update**: This paper explained that, in response to the Pandemic, Sport Wales and the ECB provided a range of ‘protect’ and ‘prepare’ type grants which were accessed by nearly all clubs. In addition, the Welsh Government created a range of emergency grants for organisations that qualified under the small business category. MF advised that with the help and advice form Cricket Wales, clubs in Wales accessed in total £1.61m of available grants. RJ said that the Cricket Wales team had done a great job in assisting the clubs for which they had shown their appreciation.

**13**.**3**. **Indoor Facilities Compliance Update:** This paper explained the actions necessary for indoor facilities to comply with the exacting requirements in accordance with Welsh Government and ECB guidance as a result of the impact of the pandemic.

1. **Commercial Digital:** MT confirmed that the Cricket Wales new website was on course to go live in January 2021.
2. **ECB Update:** LH & RJ attended a ‘Fireside Chat’ Zoom on 2nd December.

**15.1**. The ECB reverted to 4 Regions from the 7 that have existed for the last 4 years, as part of the cuts to its workforce. There was, rather disappointingly -and worryingly- little operational detail available for 2021(-eg- start date/marketing dates of National Programmes). The detail of the priorities themselves also still seemed to be debatable, or lacking full definition.

**15.2.** There was deep concern raised about Play Cricket being a measure which affects funding, as it only measures Play Cricket adoption and may not be the true picture of participation. It was also raised as a concern that the focus on girls’ sections only put women’s cricket at risk, which would affect the effectiveness, in the not too distant future of girls’ cricket funding, if they have nowhere to play once they are 16+.

**15.3.** LH proposed that the 25% Performance element of Core Funding be reduced to 15% in such an uncertain year where there may be regional restrictions preventing delivery for some of the year – and to enable Boards flexibility to do the things that are right for cricket in their county/country to get it back to ‘normal’ as much as possible.

**15.4.** The Boards were advised that strategic investment levels into women’s and girls’ workforce would be confirmed next week via email. There was the possibility of a Girls’ Secondary School Programme also mooted, possibly starting in 2021, but there was no confirmed date or detail about scale, funding, expectations.

**15.5.** As the First Class Counties have already been advised, we are expected to self-assess our progress against standards in early 2021, with a meeting with ECB to discuss this to follow in March-April.

**15.6**. It was confirmed that we should expect a County Grants scheme in 2021 – with approximately 600 projects due to be funded across England & Wales. The formula for calculating funding was being revisited and would not include number of schools. The ECB also hoped to support approximately 20 ‘apex’ projects for Women’s and Girls’ cricket priority clubs.

**15.7.** LH asked a question about the new Diverse Communities role showing in the new org chart, but did not get a detailed answer about its focus, only that it was hoped they would be in place asap in 2021.

**15.8.** LH advised that there is a Recreational Assembly planned for January 2021.

1. **Sport Wales Update:** RR advised the meeting that ITV Wales News was due this week due to air a programme about equality and diversity in Welsh Sport. The programme was quite damming on the poor progress made by the majority of the NGB’s in this area, although cricket had ranked relatively well.
2. **Working with Glamorgan Cricket:** As discussed, earlier in the meeting, the WCSG met in the week preceding the Board meeting. In addition to this, at Executive Level, Cricket Wales & Glamorgan CC are looking into the possibility of accessing the Government’s KickStart scheme, through Acorn Recruitment, to try to bolster Marketing, Comms and Digital Resource for a minimal 6-month contract from Spring to Autumn 2021.
3. **Groups & Councils & Other Operational Reports:**

**18.1. EDI Draft Minutes:** already discussed under section 12

**19. Managing Risk:** LH distributed a paper and appendix outlining the current risks facing the organisation.

**19.1.** As discussed previously, the paper emphasised the fact that the risk of (future) funding is now in the highest possible category of risk, with no certainty from ECB post February 2022 and expected loss of income as a result of the new SW investment model, in particular cricket’s inability to access a large proportion of ‘elite’ stream funding, available to Olympic/Commonwealth Games sports, or where Welsh teams can qualify for major championships.

**20. Board Meeting Dates 2021:**

Tuesday February 23rd 2021

Tuesday May 25th 2021

Tuesday August 24th 2021

Sunday 26th September 2021 – AGM (Date/time tbc)

Tuesday 26th October 2021

Tuesday 7th December 2021

**21. AOB:**

**21.1.** DHM asked whether we were in talks with any other commercial parties with regards to sponsorship. LH said that obviously the current position with Aston Martin was under review with Glamorgan but was confidential. There were possible opportunities with other existing commercial partners, but this was clearly a challenging time to be making such approaches.

**21.2.** SP asked whether Cricket Wales is going to take a stance when the new COVID-19 Vaccine becomes available. RJ said that we would take our lead from Sport Wales.

**The meeting closed at 1-00pm**

SIGNED: Date:

**Chair Cricket Wales**