



DEVON RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

Management Board Minutes

Date: 27th May 2026

Venue: MS Teams Virtual Meeting

Present: Simon Fuller, Simon Farmer, Rob Masters, Nicola Vaughan, Keisha-Ann Down, Chris Forster, Sian Brooks, Glenn Channing, Tim Warren.

Apologies: John Drew, Graeme Gillard

Declaration of Interests

None

Actions

- Review player engagement and commitment to representative rugby – Members of Rep Rugby Team.
- Develop hosting criteria and invite expressions of interest from clubs for county fixtures – Secretary to draft for discussion with Board.
- Progress discussions regarding future leadership structure for representative rugby – Board Planning Day
- Organise summer Planning Day – Secretary to canvas for dates
- Progress Commercial Partner arrangement for 2026/27 – Secretary to draft proposal for Board sign-off.

Additional Points

1. Senior Men Representative Rugby – Player Selection

The Board reviewed player representation within the Devon Senior Men County Championship squad. Whilst the wider training squad included players from a broad range of clubs, it was noted that matchday squads ultimately came from a smaller group of teams, with two clubs making up the bulk of the team.

The Board discussed the importance of strengthening engagement with the county game and understanding the factors affecting player availability and commitment. It was recognised that clubs contributing significant numbers of players can face additional pressures during the next season.

It was agreed that further work is required to better understand player perspectives and identify opportunities to strengthen buy-in and long-term engagement with representative rugby.

2. Future Leadership of Representative Rugby

The Board discussed the future structure and leadership of representative rugby within Devon RFU.

It was agreed that a formal decision on future arrangements will be made following the conclusion of the current County Championship campaign, allowing for a full review of the season and future priorities.

3. Venue Selection for County Fixtures

The Board reviewed the aspiration to host representative fixtures across a wider range of venues throughout Devon.

Whilst this had not been fully achieved during the current season, there remains strong support for developing a broader hosting programme moving forward.

An action was agreed to invite clubs in September to express interest in hosting county fixtures for future seasons. Clear hosting criteria will be developed, including:

- Changing facilities
- Parking and spectator access
- Ability to manage admission for competitive fixtures
- Suitability for senior representative rugby

The Board acknowledged the value of taking county rugby to clubs across Devon and strengthening connections with local rugby communities.

4. President Elect Process

Names were put forward to the Chair for consideration as the next President Elect.

The Board noted the commitment associated with the role, including:

- One year as President Elect
- Two years as President
- Two years as Immediate Past President

The Chair will discuss the responsibilities and expectations with shortlisted candidates before further consideration.

5. Life Membership Nominations

Two Life Membership nominations were proposed.

The Board agreed that these nominations will be presented to the AGM for approval in recognition of outstanding service and contribution to rugby in Devon.

6. County Trophies and Display

The Board discussed arrangements for the safe keeping and display of county trophies.

It was noted that trophies are currently held in different locations, including by the Secretary and former County representatives. Consideration will be given to how trophies and county silverware can be more consistently displayed and celebrated moving forward.

7. Sponsorship and Commercial Activity

An update was received on sponsorship activity and outstanding invoices relating to the 2025/26 season. It was also noted that invoices for the 2026/27 season are yet to be raised.

The Board discussed the importance of strengthening commercial processes and ensuring greater consistency in sponsorship management moving forward.

8. Commercial Partner Arrangement

The Board agreed to pursue a Commercial Partner arrangement for the 2026/27 season.

The aim of the partnership will be to support revenue generation, sponsorship opportunities, and wider commercial development across Devon RFU.

9. County Finals Weekend Budget

The Board agreed that, should Devon representative sides be successful in their respective semi-finals, an appropriate budget would be allocated to support County Finals weekend arrangements.

The Board reiterated its commitment to ensuring players, management teams, and supporters are well supported during representative finals.

10. Strategic Planning Day

The Secretary will organise a summer Planning Day to support development of:

- Devon RFU's four-year strategy in line with the new RFU Partnership Agreement
- The Local Rugby Plan for the 2026/27 season

The session will provide an opportunity for Directors and Board members to align priorities, establish clear objectives, and shape future development across the county game.

NEXT MEETING: TBC