

MINUTES OF A GENERAL MEETING
OF
LANCASHIRE COUNTY RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION LTD
HELD AT LIVERPOOL ST HELENS 18th MARCH 2026

1. **Apologies:**

Carol Baker, Robbie Jones, Kate Bennetta, Arthur Crabtree, Brian Stott, Steve Bailey, Andrew Perry, Adrian Goulding, Alec Graham, Nick Ingham, Josh Jones, Steve Godfrey, Rohan Whittle.

2. **Minutes of the General Meeting held on Wednesday 20th November at LSH**

These were on the County website.

3. **Matters arising**

No matters arising.

4. **RFU Report**

PD updated the meeting with regards to the latest Council Information. The report had been circulated. There was a discussion about the changes to the Premiership that would come into place in the 27/28 season when there would be no relegation. The RFU were looking for Investment as a Franchise system would be brought in. The intention was to expand the Premiership in 29/30.

There then followed a discussion about the Governance Representation Review that had recently taken place , it was placed on record that the Lancashire Council Members had both voted against the proposal. In the vote at the Council meeting there were 36 For and 19 against. The for represented 540 clubs and the against represented 940 clubs. There was also a suggestion that a couple of Council members had voted by pressing the wrong button ! (voted for instead of Against)

The aim was to reduce the number of Council Members , Lancashire would onlu have one Council Member. There would be a 3 year transition to implement the changes. The Board would be able to appoint who they wanted to the Council rather than the clubs and the Council would be reduced to an Advisory Role with no power of veto.

The final vote would take place at the SGM on the 24th April and there was a mechanism in place for clubs to vote or give their proxy vote to the Lancashire Council Members.

The only hope now was that clubs would vote it out. Some Council members who voted for the implementation had clubs that were not happy with their decision and wanted them to vote against it.

It was noted that once the power of veto had been removed it would not be returned.

Some senior members of the clubs resent reminded everyone that the RFU had been trying to do this for years, eg Board nominations taking precedence over Council Nominations.

MD asked if the clubs present had received the e mail about the SGM , he would also check with the clubs who were not represented.

5. **Lancashire RFU Council Representatives**

At this point MD announced that The Two Lancashire Council Representatives would continue in post for the next three years as the Person who had put his name forward had withdrawn his name and so Both reps were unopposed. DC would enter his final three years as Rep and Paul Deakin would start his second term of office.

6. **Committee Reports.**

a) **Management Board**

All minutes were posted on the website.

b) **Disciplinary Committee**

Brian Stott reported that there was good news that Match Official Abuse had been reduced, however there was still a problem within the Age Grade sector relating to problems with Coaches and parents. Clubs need to ensure that the Technical areas are clearly marked and the rules adhered to. There had not been as many complaints over the past two weeks but player numbers were now reduced as some players were going back to Rugby League.

c) **Governance**

The Safeguarding audits were continuing.

d) **Rugby Development Committee.**

Try it Rugby was continuing and there had been a series of Scrum Clinics that had come out of the Community meetings that had been held.

e) **Club and Community Rugby Committee**

CG gave a report that referred back to the survey had had run earlier in the season and had a summary of steps that needed to be taken.

Recognising that clubs are unique with their own 'personality' he had deduced that the main areas of concern were:

- Men's Engagement with Rugby
- School Engagement , including connections with schools and clubs.

There had been a series of meetings to discuss these concerns, as stated above each club is unique so the clubs attending had their own ideas and thoughts about how to solve the problem.

The meetings had been divided into geographical locations and some clubs were happier to collaborate than others, depending on their situation, RFU staff involvement may help in some cases.

Several factors were noted which may have led to this 'decline' eg Lifestyle changes , expectations of families and employers, injuries and possible volunteer involvement

It was noted that Women's and Girls rugby was thriving as was the Mini and Junior sections in some clubs however as stated above the Men's game was struggling and it was estimated that over the past 10 years 35,000 players had left the game,

Referring back to the work that he had undertaken since taking on the role of Community group Chairman he believed that things were progressing

- There had been an improvement of communication via Social media
- Social media had been reinforced via the website
- There had been Club Community Updates
- Coaching opportunities which had arisen from the cluster meetings
- A newsletter had been produced however despite it being put on Social media , e mailed to people and had been put on the website it was not clear how many people had actually seen it so it was intended to develop that further.

With regard to the website most of the sections were now completed although some parts were not yet performing as they should but it was work in progress.

f) **Competitions**

The Lancashire Cup Final date could not yet be decided because of possible play offs.

With regards to the semi final it was noted that Fleetwood were still involved.

g) **County Youth Council**

No report as Josh had sent his apologies.

7. **Playing**

KB had sent her apologies but had sent the following report:

Girls U16:

There had been extra training sessions

A new coaching team in place

100 nominations from 15 clubs

This had produced a squad of 45 from 11 clubs

There had been three games against NLD, Cheshire and Durham

Girls U18

58 girls nominated from 18 clubs , reduced to a squad of 37 from 12 clubs.

There had been games against Cheshire and Northumberland which they had won and a game against Staffordshire which they had lost

Senior Men

The Royals had had their annual game , this team were chosen from L7 and below. 14 clubs had been represented The Anti Assassins had won the game 45 -24.

The County Championship would involve two games against Yorkshire , Home and Way with the Final being played on June 6th at Twickenham should the team be successful.

Boys U18

88 players had been nominated resulting in a squad of 27.

There was one defeat away to Cheshire and 5 players had been nominated for the North. Many thanks to the Coaches involved.

U20s

There had been a loss against Durham with wins against Cheshire and Yorkshire, they were still to play Northumberland.

U17

This would be run in May, at the moment there had only been 15 nominations, they would play Yorkshire Away with games against Cheshire and Cumbria to follow. Dates and times would be advertised on Social Media.

Schools

The U18 would be ta Fylde with an U12/U13 Festival at Preston.

New schools were now involved and the Finals would be held over the next few weeks.

8. League and North Division Report

Most of the games had now been 'caught up; and the season should finish on time.

The Cup Competition would be scrapped next year because of cry offs and fixtures would now be played on International Saturdays.

There then followed a general discussion about when to play eg Augusr Bank Holiday weekend or the first Saturday.

There was a proposal on the table for playoffs to move from L7 to L6 rather than straight Promotion or relegation but nothing had yet been decided.

9. Correspondence

There was nothing appertaining to this meeting.

10. New Members

11. Date and Time of Next meeting

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 18th June 2025 at Tyldesley RUFC at
7.00pm

12. AOB

Catherine informed everyone about a form that could be completed with regards to Ramadan and the players involved to raise awareness. This had been sent to all CSO s in clubs.

There would be a game at Sedgley Pk against Yorkshire involving mixed ability players, including neuro diverse players who played regularly. This was scheduled to be played on the 19th April .KO 1.30pm

Ken Andrews informed everyone about the Wooden Spoon Day that was taking place and asked everyone if they would please raise awareness about it.

Dave Clarke asked if everyone had been made aware of the Robotic Mowers that had been sent to clubs.

The President Ian thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.54pm

Attendees:

President	Ian Spivey
Past President	Steve Blackburn
Past President	Dave Herriman
Past President	Tommy Hughes
Past President	Gill Burns MBE
Past President	Dave Clarke
Past President	Ken Andrews
Hon Secretary	Mark Downs
Hon Treasurer	Paul Deakin
Director of Rugby Development	Howard Hughes
Director	Chris Gaffey
Birchfield	E Wiles

Blackburn	Paul Westhead
Broughton Pk	Alan Marsland
Bury	Ian Mac/Adam Lawton
Firwood Waterloo RFC	D Crank
Fleetwood	Steve Doherty
Heaton Moor RUFC pm	D Todd
Leigh	T Hughes
Littleborough	Brian Hurst
Liverpool St Helens	Ian Harrison
Manchester Referees	C Ennis
Nth Manchester	G Malhotra
Oldham RUFC	R Heptonstall
Preston Grasshoppers	Ade Jebb
Sedgley Pk	R Berry
Trafford MV	I Bridle
Warrington	G Perks
Widnes	Paul Woodward
Wigan RUFC	D Clarke
League	K Potter
Mini and Junior	I Spivey
Individual Members	Ian Scott Brown
	Chris Smail
Safeguarding	Christine Spivey
Lancs/Try It	C Jones
Minutes	Anne Clarke