



RFU Representatives Report – extra update

An additional RFU Council meeting took place in July to discuss three issues; the lessons learned from the tackle height decision, a RFU governance and representation review and governance of the elite women's game. There was deemed insufficient time to discuss these at the June meeting, so an extra meeting of Council outside the usual programme of meetings was called.

Tackle height lessons learned

Council commissioned a group to review the lessons learned from the tackle height decision-making process. The group reported its findings to the meeting. It had interviewed a range of people involved, and reviewed documents. The group was clear that there are lessons for all parts of the organisation, including Council, the Board and the Executive Staff.

Key recommendations included:

- (a) Everyone to play a role in check and challenge.
- (b) The Board to provide a view on matters of risk (reputation, financial etc) on resolutions that will be put to Council, such as regulatory matters.
- (c) Decisions with a significant impact on the game to be flagged earlier.
- (d) There to be risk assessments and impact assessments for those key decisions.
- (e) There to be greater transparency and consultation with the game, with more briefing papers for participants (e.g. CBs) ahead of decisions.
- (f) There should be a clearer sign-off process for releases to the media and the Game.
- (g) Leaks to the press must stop.

Governance and representation review

- Council agreed to institute a review of governance and representation. This will cover how decisions are made, including the relationships between Council, Board and Executive.
- Council is required to undertake a review every five years.
- As it has been reported in the press, it can be confirmed that Council rejected the option of having an independent chair (either entirely independent, or a participant in a club or CB) and required the chair of the review to be a Past President or Distinguished Member.
- The Council Nominations will seek applications for both the chair and review group members over next few weeks by advertisement that will include TORs and relevant role description.
- The appointment of the chair to be approved by Council.
- Members of the review group, which is expected to be 9 strong, will be drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds and with the skills set out in the role description.
- Appointment of review group membership is delegated to the Council Nominations Committee and the appointed chair, as long as the composition of the proposed review group matches the guidelines for breadth of backgrounds set by Council; otherwise, Council must agree appointments.
- The review will involve wide consultation with all aspects of the game and other stakeholders. It is expected the consultation will start in the Autumn.

- Any recommendations would need to come back for approval, and the target is an SGM in autumn 2024.

Governance of the elite women's game

Council agreed to delegate the management of the Premiership Women's Rugby competition to the new joint venture company set up by the RFU and the participating clubs but retained responsibility for game regulation and similar matters (discipline, match official appointments etc), as it does for the men's Premiership.