

RUGBY DEVELOPMENT PHASE TWO RE-ORGANISATION

Background

Phase one re-organisation of Rugby Development staffing was completed earlier this year. Here the focus was on the re-organisation of ten functional strands, each with its own manager, into five – each led by a newly appointed Function Head. In addition phase one included the re-focusing of the job descriptions of 50 Rugby Development Officers and the re-alignment of 120 fully-funded Community Rugby Coaches. The five new functional areas are:

Club Development – led by Simon Winman and focused on enhancing the off-field environment – developing facilities and ensuring clubs are supported with management, governance and volunteer development.

Game Development – led by Gary Henderson and focused on enhancing the on-field environment – ensuring ample high quality training and development opportunities for referees, coaches and medics along with enhancement of playing and competition opportunities.

Education Development – led by Mark Saltmarsh and focused on rugby in schools, colleges and universities – ensuring support and enhancing links and progression between schools, colleges and universities and between these environments and clubs.

Rugby Growth – led by Alastair Marks and focused on creating a step change in the numbers playing all variants of rugby – sustaining the engagement of existing players, developing a nationwide touch strategy and increasing the opportunities available to women and girls.

Local Rugby Delivery – led by Rosie Williams and focused on the management of our large local field force – working with CBs and supporting clubs to become stronger and to grow the game in local communities.

Phase two re-organisation has been about re-positioning and re-focusing the remainder of staff against these five functional areas.

Rationale

Phase two re-organisation has not been about saving money or reducing headcount – indeed it is cost neutral and has the same headcount. Neither is it any reflection on what has been there in the past or the work undertaken by staff in the past. It is focused on building what we believe to be the right structure that can deliver against our ambitious aspirations for the period up until 2015 and to ensure a lasting legacy beyond it.

At the heart of our thinking has been the Core Purpose of “strengthening our member clubs and growing the game in communities around them” – adopted fully by the game in 2011 and, along with the six key drivers, giving a simple and clear focus to our work.

In bringing together disparate functions with differing numbers of specialist staff in different parts of the country – e.g. Four Funding & Facilities Managers and Eight Coach & Player Development Officers - we wanted to create a more consistent delivery structure. Balancing the numbers of technical leads required with a desire to ensure that as many staff as possible could be deployed locally to support clubs and CBs was not easy. However, we are confident that the new structure provides new opportunities.

One of the great strengths of our game is that it has a very strong volunteer basis – volunteers who invest heavily in the management, governance and development of the game as well as in the operational aspects of the game and in the technical side through refereeing, coaching etc. A key part of our re-organisation thinking has been centred on this and on thinking about where professional staff can add most value to the significant volunteer effort – and not replicate, duplicate, or impede it.

Changes to staff management areas

The focus of the six areas is on operational management of staff, there is no intention for this to have any effect on the governance or organisation of the game. We have listened to a lot of diverse views from CBs and others over the last twelve months about effectiveness and efficiency of current operations and have attempted to reflect these in the new working practices. As such, the changes we are implementing, we believe, will help facilitate a more productive staff management structure in the future that will provide a greater service to our member clubs and CBs and reflect their changing needs.

We considered carefully the optimum number of geographic areas, taking into account the numbers of specialist staff that we wanted to place at local level and balancing this with the optimum number of people that it was felt appropriate for any one individual to manage. To achieve our desired result of creating consistency across the country and considering the range of specialist staff that we felt were needed we arrived at six.

We considered retaining eight however this would have meant that we would not have been in a position to afford as many specialist staff and on balance we decided that the impact of not having these staff would be detrimental. We also considered moving to four and aligning with Divisional areas however the people management implications would have prohibited effective operation of this.

In determining the composition of the six areas we considered a range of options, ultimately arriving at one which will create the most equitable option in relation to number of CBs, number of clubs, number of staff and having considered transport routes.

We understand that the alignment may not match perfectly with some existing relationships between CBs and where this is the case staff will work to support the continuation of these links. The new areas also provide opportunity for staff to exchange ideas, challenges and solutions across some non traditional boundaries.

CBs should be re-assured that a key focus for us going forward will be to enhance the connectivity and relationships with individual CBs. Whilst we will continue with some cross CB working and arrange some meetings at a level bigger than CBs, we expect to have greater interaction with individual CBs and to release more staff time to enhance the development of the game at the geographic level that much of it is organised – within CBs.

Focus of the new roles

Attached is an organisational chart outlining the composition of the five functional units and further information on the roles and focus is detailed below:

Club Development

To reflect the additional RFU investment into club facilities, along with the increasing opportunities to access external funding, we have strengthened the facilities staffing. A new post of Facilities Investment Manager will identify potential new strands of investment, together with overseeing the work of six area based Facility Managers. In addition, a nationally-based Club Facilities Technical Manager will ensure that we are up to speed with all technical requirements (lighting, pitches, planning regulations, energy efficiency etc.) and that efficiencies in these areas can be secured and passed on to clubs.

Two posts will focus on the development of simple, accessible support for clubs in the areas of management and governance. Along with assistance on areas such as CASC, incorporation and insurance we will be working to assist clubs with financial sustainability, fundraising and securing savings through central procurement of goods and services.

A further two specialist posts will focus on strategies to support clubs and CBs in retention and recruitment of volunteers and on the enhancement of reward and recognition incentives for volunteers. We expect our RDOs to play a more significant role in helping clubs in the identification, training, deployment and support of volunteers – this is a core element of sports development work and one which we must properly equip our biggest group of staff to undertake effectively.

Game Development

National Technical Leads for both Coaching and Match Officials will ensure that our training, education and qualification programmes are fit for purpose and meeting the needs of current and aspirant referees and coaches. They will also work closely with the Coaching Technical Group and RFRU respectively to develop solutions to challenges being faced within the game.

A dedicated workforce development team replaces the previously separate coaching and refereeing development staff. Here a Training Workforce Development Manager will oversee the work of six Area Training Managers and six Area Training Officers. This team will work closely with CB Coaching Committees, Referees Societies and Federations to support and service the training and development of both referees and coaches. The Managers will work to build new relationships and systems that will enable us to handle the growth that we anticipate over the next 3-5 years (e.g. in securing external funding, building links with other training providers, supporting the development of additional tutors, exploring opportunities for online learning) whilst the Officers will ensure business as usual – making sure that, whilst we develop an enhanced offer for the future, business as usual continues and that an increased number of training courses can be staged at a more local and accessible level – meeting the needs of Societies, Federations and CB coaching committees. Two Panel Development Managers also sit as part of this team to support, in partnership with Groups, Referees at levels 3, 4 & 5 .

A Player Pathway Development Manager will be responsible for the creation of seamless playing opportunities supported by a Player Development Manager (focused on support for the game for 6-14 year olds) and six Player Development Officers whose focus will be on working with CBs and others to create improved playing opportunities in the 14-24 age group – the area where we know drop out is significant.

To assist the flow of information across the game, to maximise knowledge from within the professional game, to learn from other nations and from other sports a Knowledge Development Manager will focus on ensuring that the Technical leads and workforce development staff have easy access to the very best information. They will also lead on the provision of an on-line learning and training platform for the game.

Education Development

National Technical Leads will each develop strategies and solutions to increase the number of people playing regular rugby in schools, colleges and universities. This reflects the need for specific expertise that focuses on the retention of players through their time in university and the major growth opportunity for the game that exists in colleges.

The Schools Development Manager and Colleges Development Manager will both work very closely in developing tools and solutions for use by the Rugby Development Officers with the Universities Development Manager doing likewise with the Universities Development Officers (see Local Rugby Delivery).

A new post of Education Operations Manager will ensure that quality support is provided to the operations of the ESRFU, ECRFU and SRFU, in addition to ensuring effective and efficient rollout of our rugby strategies and solutions to the education sector, our staff and volunteers.

Rugby Growth

This is a very new area of our operation with Alastair Marks only having taken up his position as Head of Rugby Growth four weeks ago. Whilst we assess the staffing requirement in this area a headcount of three posts are included. However, they remain “on ice” at present until an assessment of need is complete. In the meantime, a dedicated post is included to ensure effective management of the enhanced and expanded O2 Touch programme.

Local Rugby Delivery

A move to six operational management areas results in a team of six enhanced Area Manager positions. Core responsibilities of these posts are focused around high quality management and development of the staff deployed at area level and on liaison/support to CBs.

Area Managers will directly manage Rugby Development Officers (who in turn manage the work of Community Rugby Coaches) along with a dedicated Women and Girls Development Officer and Universities Development Officer. The role of the Rugby Development Officer as the primary interface between the RFU and its member clubs remains core, and is indeed, enhanced.

As part of their role in supporting CBs Area Managers will work with CBs to develop Planning, Funding and Resources plans and input to CB Executive meetings (and other appropriate forums) to facilitate strong and effective communication. They will also work closely with the National Managers responsible for Player Development Officers, Area Training Managers, Area Training Officers and Area Facility Managers to ensure CB and club needs are met.

Process

All affected staff are in a consultation process and are aware that the proposals mean (a) their job is unaffected/only marginally affected and they are slotted into an identical or comparable role (b) there is a job with substantively the same responsibilities however with different numbers of roles or different geography and hence they are pooled for one of these roles (c) their current job no longer exists either in totality or at the same grade/with the same responsibilities in the new structure and hence they are at risk of redundancy.

Voluntary redundancy has been offered and a small number of staff have taken this option. All other affected staff will have the opportunity to apply for any of the new vacant roles – all of which will be initially advertised on an internal basis only.

The recruitment process has already commenced and we expect this to be complete, at least on an internal basis, by the end of August.

Volunteer involvement has been built into the recruitment process for many of the new posts. With a central element of the Area Manager roles being about collaborative working with CBs, groups of CBs in an area are being invited to nominate members onto the interview panels.