

Council Representative Report

Buckinghamshire RFU AGM July 22

Since coming into post on August 1st 2021, I have attended seven Council meetings, seven ‘informal’ Council meetings (held virtually) and three Council Equity, Diversity & Inclusion meetings. In addition, I attended five of sub-committee meetings to update myself on current agendas at Club & CB, Game, Player and Rugby Growth Sub Committees.

I have met with the Council Nominations Committee on 3 occasions and have been working on their behalf on a training and development programme for Council Members, which will align to any changes made as a result of recommendations put forward by the Council NGB¹ Review Group and ratified by Council. Essentially, the programme will develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours required by Council Members to fulfil their role and function even more effectively than currently the case.

As promised in my manifesto I have reported to member clubs on my voting record and provided a brief commentary as to why I voted as I did. I remain available to all clubs to further discuss any of these issues.

At the Council meeting on 17th June, Council ratified my nomination to Chair the Rugby Growth Sub Committee and take a seat on the Community Game Board. I am highly aware that this is an unusual appointment for a new Council Member, and I am grateful for the opportunity to be at the heart of the decision-making process for the community game. It will also place Bucks RFU and its clubs in a stronger position to offer a perspective on matters that affect them. I will update the CB and clubs on the details of my brief in due course.

The main on-going issues for the 2022-23 season are:

- i. the implementation of the Future Competitions Structure: fixtures have now been published, and clubs can now look forward to a different season in 22-23. Monitoring of matches played – especially at lower XV levels – will be maintained.
- ii. The health of the male XVs game: there is significant concern at CGB² that evidence is now showing a dramatic decline in player numbers since pre-pandemic. It is recognised that this is not a result of the pandemic alone and that the male XV game has been in decline for some time. A working group has been tasked over the next 6 weeks to come up with a response that the RFU can provide, and that clubs and CBs can utilise to stabilise player numbers and help increase frequency of playing.
- iii. The GMS review and subsequent roll-out of adaptations: this is a critical issue for all clubs in Bucks and a close eye will be maintained on its progress.

Simon Winman
Bucks RFU Council Representative

¹ National Governing Body – the RFU in this case

² Community Game Board: tasked with running the game below the Championship