

**Minutes of the Thirtieth Meeting of the Council
held on 11 November 2009**

Present:	Mr M Ward	Chairman
	Miss S Plant	President
	Dr N S Wrench	Vice Chairman
	Mr B Rea	Management
	Mr R Beer	Management
	Mr D Browne	Management
	Mr N Chilton	Management
	Mrs S Marlow	Management/Girls Youth
	Mrs D Bonner	SCHUA
	Mr J Gawley	Technical/ Vice President
	Mr R Macer	Boys Youth
	Mr R Strudwick	RDA
	Mr T Eaude	Development/ Bucks
	Mr P Dunn-Simms	Berkshire
	Ms S Lunn	Hampshire
	Mr J Daniel	Kent
	Ms L Kay	Middlesex
	Ms S Walker	Middlesex
	Mr A Cock	Oxford
	Mr A Hilton	Surrey
	Mr J Murphy	Sussex
By invitation	Ms H Woodford	EH Development Director
	Ms N Jones	EH National Manager Regional Network

The Chairman welcomed all those attending Council for the first time. He particularly welcomed Holly Woodford the EH Development Director and Naomi Jones the EH National Development Manager who was currently doubling as the South RDM. He thanked Naomi in particular for the work she had done for the South in that time.

The Chairman said he was pleased to report that Colin Howard, the Independent Chairman of Appeals, had resumed his role after a period of illness.

Apologies for absence

248 Mrs K Daffey, Ms C Putt, Mr M Taylor, Mrs F Tierney, Mr M Umney.

Minutes of the Previous meeting

249 The Minutes were AGREED.

Matters arising

a) Minute 187 - Junior hockey bench numbers

250 Ms Woodford undertook to consider the EH Competition Rules to ensure clarity on this matter. (subsequently confirmed as allowing 17th and 18th players on the bench provided they are not in playing kit and are clearly distinguishable.)

b) Minute 187 - Long Pile Pitches

251 An EH policy statement had been issued regarding the use of 3G pitches in the EHL and EH competition. Pitches of 40mm or just over should get through the FIH test procedure and the limited number of those approved were listed on the EH website. Leagues were free to make their own rules regarding the acceptability of other long pile 3G pitches.

c) Minute 193 – Discipline Code

252 There had been no further response from EH on this issue.

d) Minute 199 – Management Committee

253 Mr Browne, Hon. Secretary of Kent, had been appointed to the vacancy on the Committee and was approved by Council.

e) Minute 243 – EH RDM

254 Ms Jones reported that Kirsty Brammer had been appointed Regional Manager South with effect from 23 November. Kirsty was currently the FA County Development Manager in Wiltshire and prior to that she was Girls and Women's Football Development Officer for Oxford Active Sports. She was a member of Oxford City Ladies HC.

f) Minute 245 – South Coaching Group

255 The Chairman said he would circulate details of the Group's remit and composition. (attached)

Regional Disciplinary Administrator's Report

256 Mr Strudwick updated the report that had been circulated.

257 There had so far been twenty two Red Cards issued plus two Matchday Misconduct and one Disrepute Charge, as at 10 November 2009. One club, British Airways, had contributed two Red Cards, one MMO and the Disrepute Charge in one League match. Mr Strudwick thanked Alison Toner, the CDA of Middlesex, for the professional manner in which she dealt with the problem at British Airways.

258 One appeal had been heard on the written evidence and had been dismissed.

259 All counties had now appointed a CDA and a Deputy CDA.

260 Mr Strudwick's report was NOTED.

Umpires' Report

261 In Mrs Daffey's absence Mrs Bonner reported. The Association's Committee had met the previous evening. There were six candidates on the Men's programme and four on the women's programme. Three members had been awarded their L3 this season and others were close to being nominated.

262 The Association was still struggling to fulfil commitments on the women's programme. The Chief Coach and Chair of Selection were looking at a range of different approaches which would actively encourage the counties to nominate more of their members for the Level 2 award.

263 Sadly discipline seemed to be a problem for some teams. With only six league games played one team has already been awarded 11 yellow cards and a red, with two other teams had 10 yellows each.

264 The Chairman asked about the role of the SCHUA. Mrs Bonner said that its role was an association of Level 2 umpires, looking after issues such as coaching and recommending candidates for the Level 3 and appointing umpires as requested to the top divisions of the South's Leagues and appropriate rounds of EH competitions. Level 2 and Level 3 umpires were also normally members of their county associations and supported the development of Level 1 umpires.

265 Dr Wrench said that Level 1 was the responsibility of county associations each of which was an integral part of the county structure. County associations were each represented on the SCHUA Committee which provided an opportunity for exchange of best practice, exchange of coaches etc. South umpires were normally insured through membership of the county associations; it was not a benefit provided by SCHUA.

Management

266 The Chairman reported briefly on the October meeting of the Committee. The issues discussed were:

- the South Schools' Minis would be organised at a weekend as no midweek organiser could be found.
- EH had not then been prepared to modify its published ruling about levels of hockey permitted on long pile pitches but now accepted that Leagues could make their own decisions as to the acceptability of any long pile pitch.
- the financial outturn of the JRPCs; final accounts were not yet available.
- the future role and organisation of the Association's roles; this would be followed up at the next meeting.
- the conflicts of eligibility dates for junior leagues and national competitions.

267 Dr Wrench stressed the need for counties and clubs to respond to the RCC Chairman's discussion paper.

268 Dr Wrench said he would circulate the unapproved full Minutes of the 19 October meeting shortly.

269 Mrs Marlow commented that there was considerable concern at the conflict of single system and junior leagues' eligibility birth dates where leagues were using 1 September whilst EH tournaments were requiring 1 January. There was also the problem of clashing JAC and league dates. Mr Hilton confirmed clubs predominantly wanted 1 September. The problem for the smaller clubs was that if they released players for JAC activity they could not field sides for leagues.

270 Mrs Marlow said that the other problem from resource standpoint was the doubling of the junior competitions with separate schools and clubs competitions. Mr Macer said it represented a doubling of the workload and finding organisers and facilities was proving difficult.

271 Mr Murphy raised the issue of the eligibility of 13 year olds to play in U13 competitions. It was confirmed that a child became eligible to play in adult hockey on the thirteenth birthday. This did not alter the eligibility to play in any U13 competition for which the child was previously eligible. Dr Wrench said he would prepare a formal statement [attached to the Minutes].

Report of Development Working Group

272 Mr Eaude summarised the position. Two sets of minutes had been circulated.

273 The process of JRPCs and Tier 1 had gone reasonably well. The issues emerging were:

- the process of player nomination to JRPCs.
- the issue of kit which was a complete mess. Some of kit issued was unfit for purpose particularly for girls.
- the selection of players for Tier1 and from Tier1.
- the Tier1 financial framework had been incorrect.
- the EH website would not be able to handle player nominations in 2010 and a common spreadsheet should be adopted.
- some disappointment at the availability of CCCs.
- the need to improve quality of locally appointed managers and coaches
- the need to appoint coaches and managers much earlier.
- the coaching syllabus needed to be more widely available.
- dates for 2010 needed to be published now.
- there needed to be feedback to both the players and to parents. The latter needed to be in terms which parents would understand.

274 Mr Eaude wished to record his thanks for the enormous amount of work put in by the centre coordinators at Oxford and Tonbridge. He was pleased that both Trena Partridge and Andy Rogers were able to continue their roles. The situation at Eastleigh had been less than satisfactory both from an organisational and operational standpoint. Mr Ward said he hoped he had identified a new administrator for Eastleigh 2010 although this would not necessarily resolve the operational issues.

275 Mr Eaude said that players' numbers had been generally OK but lowest in the higher age groups. It was disappointing that Eastleigh did not receive any West players. Generally the fee charged for players who attended all sessions was good value.

276 One of the issues had been consistent attendance. This was always going to be a problem when activity was in the School holiday periods. Mr Dunn-Simms said that a family could not be expected to arrange its holidays around one child's attendance at a hockey activity. He was concerned at the possibility of talent loss.

277 Mr Eaude sought views on the nomination process from counties/JACs and what should happen to players coming back from this year's JRPCs. Mr Dunn-Simms and Mr Hilton said the nomination process had been confusing. It had to be clear who could nominate and logically it had to be from the JACs. There should be no independent nomination process by-passing the system.

278 Counties agreed that all JRPC players should return to the JAC. Some concern was expressed regarding the public schools and the need to engage them into the system. It was recognised that the system was still in a transitional stage and that some flexibility needed to be retained for the 2010 nomination process but no longer.

279 Council AGREED the following policy with regard to the 2010 process:

'All players who attend the JRPC should normally return to the next round of JAC. This includes National Age Group players, unless they are playing regular National League hockey, though NAGS commitments will take priority. Players will be asked to contact appropriate JAC organisers. Nominations to JRPCs will normally be through JACs, though other nominations may, in exceptional circumstances, be accepted in 2010 when supported by witness statements from suitable adults, such as a school teacher or coach. Any player attending a JAC and not nominated by the JAC Organisers cannot seek to attend JRPC by another route.'

280 Ms Woodford said there were clearly a number of issues arising from the discussion that would require EH's attention particularly as the South's experience mirrored that of other regions. She said that the Performance Director's aim was that all player development should be through the JAC route. She conceded that several aspects of the system development had been too rushed with inadequate consideration of the resources needed. The SSIG Finance Group would be reviewing the financial data in some detail. The issue surrounding CCCs had been identified and it was hoped that a better commitment could be achieved in 2010. The kit issue was definitely on the agenda.

Review of JAC/JDC

281 The Chairman said he hoped all counties would contribute to the discussion. It was important to identify common themes, pitfalls and benefits, which had been found with the initial implementation with the single system.

282 Each county commented on the way the JDCs had been organised and the experience. Several general points emerged:

- Too much was being attempted by too few - the same few!
- Good paid administration was becoming essential but not easily found.
- The availability of pitch facilities and coaches had determined when centres were held and dates were different from those in the centralised calendar.
- For the same reasons some counties would not be able to follow the centralised calendar this season.
- The number of sustainable JDCs had yet to emerge.
- There was a drop in numbers with the older age groups
- Clubs were reluctant to release players on Sundays, some counties were opting for Friday evenings for JDC activity.

283 Generally the financial outturn had been OK with small surpluses obtained. However the need to pay for administration and coaches could result in increased costs to participants.

284 Mr Dunn-Simms said that Berkshire as a county had come close to melt down as a result of volunteer loss following the imposition of the single system. The county was now only dealing with junior development and using a paid administrator – it was taking no role in adult hockey although it hoped that this situation would change for the better in due course.

285 Mr Daniel on behalf of Kent confirmed that from 2010 its girls wished to participate in the South county/JAC championship as this was more appropriate to the new system; this would bring Kent girls into line with Kent boys. Kent women's clubs would continue to participate in the East league arrangements.

Technical Officiating

286 Mr Gawley said he was having difficulty identifying officials for the various indoor tournaments. Technical officials had traditionally been drawn for the umpires' community but this was not essential. He asked Members to encourage participation in this increasingly essential role.

287 Mr Gawley stated that he now wished, for personal reasons, to stand down as the Technical Officials Coordinator. He had emailed all his contacts seeking a successor.

Chairman's Summary

288 The Chairman thanked everyone for a very useful session. He appreciated the attendance of new faces around the table. The challenge of the new systems required an increasing level of professionalism from the volunteer sector as well as the need to seek out good paid administrators. He thanked Holly Woodford and Naomi Jones for their attendance. He hoped it had provided them with feel for the implementation problems being faced by counties and the Association. He looked forward to working with the new EH RDM in due course.

Date of Next Meeting

289 18. March 2010
24 June 2010 to be preceded by the AGM.

Chairman