



NORTHERN CRICKET UNION OF IRELAND

PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF
DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2014-2018

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INTRODUCTION

This review briefly documents the progress made by the Management Board and its three Directorates (between late 2013 and March 2015) in realising the proposals in its Development Plan published in 2014.

The account is complemented by the following symbols, indicating the current position on what is largely an ongoing process:

		
Proposals implemented and complete	Proposal implementation in progress, further action required	No action against proposal

PERFORMANCE REVIEW

MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Management Board has final responsibility for the administration of the Union , including all financial matters.

An outline review of progress against proposals articulated in the most recent Development Plan, is presented in the table below:

Proposal	Review	Status
Promotion of Board Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation took place in early 2015 through an ‘Away Day’ at which Board members were satisfied with progress made in the realisation of Development Plan objectives • Evaluation will continue in 2016, when it will be decided if a Replacement Plan will be required for the period 2016-2018 • Much will depend on the outcome of Cricket Ireland’s current discussions with the Provincial Unions on an overall review of governance, legal and financial structures, based upon partnership and collaboration between interested parties 	
Establishment of a Chairman’s Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee has met on several occasions and has undertaken its role in a comprehensive manner, including a preliminary examination of approaches to governance models for Cricket Ireland 	

FINANCE AND POLICY

The remit of the Finance and Policy Directorate extends across three primary areas:

1. **Finance** – financial delegations to the Honorary Treasurer; budget setting and monitoring of financial performance; insurance and treasury arrangements; preparation of the annual financial statements and liaison with Auditors; liaison with Cricket Ireland Finance Committee; and determination of General Secretary’s remuneration;
2. **Fundraising and marketing** – sponsorship activities and relationship management; fundraising; events management (e.g. Annual Dinner); and marketing and media relations;
3. **Governance and policy** – forward planning and the Development Plan; risk management; Board/Directorate succession planning; review of general rules; and communication strategy.

An outline review of progress against proposals articulated in the most recent Development Plan, is presented in the table below:

Proposal	Review	Status
Prudent working capital and financial management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved budgetary control over development activities (coaching and facility hire) • Catering costs monitored against budget • Comprehensive review of insurance spend and re-tendering of supply resulting in improved cover and cost savings • Regular tracking of cash balances (facilitated by implementation of online banking) • Further work required in documenting procurement and authorisation protocols 	
Development of a sponsorship relationship strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of Commercial Committee, reporting to Finance & Policy • Successful targeting of new sponsors • Change in PRO appointment and responsibility, further evolution of role expected • Key risk of concentration of Challenge Cup and League sponsorship remains to be addressed • New sponsorship opportunities still to be explored, including development of marketing and publicity materials 	
Increased spend on cricket development activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of continuing financial support from CI, and ongoing funding by NCU towards CI CDO in the NCU area • Additional funding from Belfast City Council • Full year of implementation of agreement with UU (coaching facilities) • Improved monitoring of income and spend against budget • Contract with Copius terminated following service assessment and value for money review 	

Enhancement of communication strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media policy published on the Union's website and distributed to all clubs • Consideration of communication strategy for all events and activities (including face to face communication, website, and local media) 	
Development of marketing strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of Commercial Committee, reporting to Finance & Policy • Improved use of technology at Annual Dinner to promote activities and profile • More publicity and profile for interprovincial and representative youth cricket (including new sponsors) • Exploratory discussions with local council/Assembly representatives 	
Identify additional fundraising events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Night at the Races held to generate funding for youth team tour of South Africa • Further focus required in this area during 2015/16 	
Development of Corporate Risk Register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk areas identified and articulated • This area requires to be revisited to reflect current NCU activities and plans prior to final articulation in documented Risk Register 	
Research/Club census	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research on various subjects of concern will continue, including, but not limited to, trends in registration of players per club • Research data provided to Directorates as required 	
Safeguarding children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of adequacy of existing Child Protection Policy and procedures (including communication with Clubs) completed • Procedures revised to reflect current best practice and guidance, including the Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport in Ireland. Copy of current Child Protection Policy made available on the website • Appointment of Child Protection Officer (Geoffrey Hayburn) • Database of Club Welfare Officers (or those responsible for child protection measures) established 	

DOMESTIC CRICKET

The remit of the Domestic Cricket Directorate is underpinned by a continuous review of domestic cricket and extends across the following:

1. **Increased participation**
2. **Club awareness/development**
3. **Improvement in standards**

An outline review of progress against proposals articulated in the most recent Development Plan, is presented in the table below:

Proposal	Review	Status
The Appointment of A Cricket Development Officer with Emphasis on Clubs/Youth Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finances are in place and position to be advertised shortly. Possibility of funding for two CDO's 	
Club Accreditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some clubs have achieved accreditation • Lack of overall progress amongst clubs • Existing proposal either too onerous or indeed impossible for some clubs • Discussions with CI ongoing to provide an alternative tiered system • CI recently provided outline of alternative scheme 	
Increased Participation of Umpires/Scorers. Possibility of creating an Elite Panel of Umpires.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIACUS decided against elite panel • Various schemes in place to encourage increased participation • Umpires course successful with a number of new umpires expressing availability • Two "Know the Laws" evenings run with Muckamore and Instonians to be commended. To roll out over the rest of NCU • List of "part time" umpires to be created • NIACUS representative appointed to Directorate 	
Junior Leagues – Consultation to Consider Reorganistaion and in Particular Regionalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of clubs who responded were against regionalisation at this time • Competition rules under continuing review 	
Senior Leagues – Consider the Restructuring of Same and to Review and keep Review Competition Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clubs and Officials consulted • Premier League to remain as is • Promotion and Relegation to remain as is • Rule Changes brought into effect • Other Rule changes to be considered • Player of the year awards popular addition 	

Schools Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed with major contribution from School's Committee • No major changes suggested at present • Effects of Saturday cricket to be kept under review • Emphasis for new CDO in relation to primary schools cricket 	
Women's Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premier League established • Girls' cricket progressing • Nigel Jones commended for excellent work in this area 	
Grounds Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed in principle • Recruitment an issue • Terms of reference still uncertain 	
Youth Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully reviewed • Best –v- Best structure to continue • League banding perceived to be successful • Girls' cricket to be expanded 	
Overseas Players	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed and proposal established in relation to "Non-Local" players as opposed to "overseas" • Emphasis on coaching qualifications 	
Club Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of additional awards • Increased interest • Increased numbers • Cost and venue to be continually reviewed 	
Increased Participation from Non-Traditional Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be done in conjunction with CDO after appointment of same 	

REPRESENTATIVE CRICKET

The remit of the Representative Cricket Directorate extends across the following:

4. **Interprovincial Cricket** – including liaison with Cricket Ireland’s Operations Manager;
5. **Youth Representative teams** – U 11 – U17;
6. **Appointment of Coaches** – provincial elite squad coaching and provincial academy developments.

An outline review of progress against proposals articulated in the most recent Development Plan, is presented in the table below:

Proposal	Review	Status
<p>Northern Knights to be competitive in the three formats – 3 Day, 50 over, T20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target of winning a minimum of one competition per year achieved in 2013, not 2014 • Development of local players to play for the Northern Knights ongoing (including decision to limit the number of non local players to two • Academy formed in 2013/14, but transitioned in 2014/15 to a programme of arranging matches for a young (U21) NCU team • Ongoing plans with coach to organise specialist workshops and practice for the weaker skill sets within the Knights 	
<p>Enable the Union to administer all aspects of the Northern Knights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular meetings between the Union and CI held with a view to empowering and up-skilling the Union to manage obligations imposed by the Inter Provincial Targeted Assistance and Performance Programme (‘TAPP’) funding provisions, and to inherit from CI the day to day management of the Northern Knights • Collaborative working with CI to secure funding for existing programmes (contribution from CI maintained and new council funding secured) • CI CEO and Chairman addressed the Board at the January 2015 ‘Away Day’ in relation to this proposal 	
<p>Maximise sponsorship and marketing opportunities for the Northern Knights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsorship successfully generated for both 2013 and 2014 seasons, with an excellent new primary sponsor, PWC, being secured in 2014 • Sustained efforts to maximise match attendance demonstrated by an excellent turnout in 2014 at the T20 matches in Comber • Promotion and marketing of the Knights ongoing, and facilitated by the appointment of a new PRO. Further progress expected to be achieved in this area as a result of increased involvement of the TAO 	

Fully participate in the CI Match Allocation Group (MAG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richard Johnson appointed to MAG, this will facilitate increasing the CI rating of grounds in the NCU area 	
Establish and maintain an effective and competitive regional youth structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCU youth development and coaching steering group established in September 2013 Structured regional development program at Under11, Under13, Under15 and Under 17 levels now in second full winter of operation Coaching programme for 7 to 9 year olds now in second full winter of operation Ulster Country v Ulster Town 2013 / 2014 established Arrangement of 12 match tour to South Africa for 15's and under 18's (March 2015) Improved performance from all NCU youth sides evident in 2014 Target of 4 selections per age group per season to CI youth teams ongoing (2014: U15 – 2; U17 – 1; U19 – 3) 	
Creation of a coaching structure that supports the regional development programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth sides playing under the Knights banner. Decision taken to progress with under 21 NCU side as possibly a more effective means than the operation of a Junior Knights Academy to progress players to full Knights side Scott Irvine appointed by Cricket Ireland to drive forward coaches association U13 and U15 “development” squads established at Grosvenor on Friday nights both 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 	
Progression of Women's and Girls' cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCU Women's Squad - a training/match programme is currently being put in place and will commence in June 2015. This comes off the back of a strong NCU Women's Premier League season in 2014. Clubs/players have been informed and a squad manager has also been identified NCU U17 Girls -- established since November 2012 with annual fixtures and camps taking place against the LCU/NWCU in the summer months. Since the introduction of the NCU U17 Girls squad programme, three girls have gone on to play for the Ireland U17 squad with Hannah Grieve being selected for the full Ireland Women's Squad in 2013. NCU U15 Girls – to be reviewed at the end of the 2015 season in terms of its activation. NCU U13 Girls - to be reviewed at the end of the 2015 season in terms of its activation for 2016. From the U11 schools competitions in 2013-2014 there is a player base starting to develop in which winter squad workshops will look to begin in Feb 2016. 	

CONCLUSION

The Management Board has provided clubs with this update on present progress in addressing the aims outlined in its Development Plan.

The Board will continue to make every effort to ensure that the Northern Cricket Union keeps abreast of developments in what is an ever-changing sport at national, regional and club level.

As stated in the current plan, the Management Board remains of the view that realisation of its aims:

“.....will depend on a meaningful partnership with Cricket Ireland when required, informed recognition of the inter-relationship between the professional and amateur game and the fact that the strength of your union has always been our volunteers. “

(Northern Cricket Union Development Plan 2014-18, page 23)