

Tuesday March 21 2023



Chair 6 Month Interim Update

Introduction

As I have approached approximately six months in the role as Chair of Cricket Scotland, this is an appropriate time to give a detailed, transparent, and frank assessment of the health of the organisation.

When I joined Cricket Scotland in October 2022, the organisation was under immense stress. The revelations within the sport of cricket had a detrimental effect on the reputation of Cricket Scotland, and the organisation was months away from insolvency.

My ambition for the running of Cricket Scotland is to have a holistic view and rebuild the entire organisation across all departments. Meaningful change cannot be achieved unless all areas across Cricket Scotland are reviewed and improved.

Whilst addressing the findings from the “Changing The Boundaries” report is the top priority; it is far from the only issue that needs to be overhauled at Cricket Scotland.

Over the past six months, significant progress has been made. In addition to saving the firm from insolvency, we have professionalised the women’s game, and significantly upgraded our approach to EDI.

This update includes an update on the “Changing The Boundaries” workstreams, but also outlines the wider issues Cricket Scotland faces. It includes the progress made to date and an update on the publication of the groundbreaking Governance Review, which has been published today, as well as changes to the executive team.

Changing The Boundaries Progress Update

Governance Review

Today we welcome the publishing of the Governance Review, authored by Harper Macleod LLP which outlines the company's future board structure and direction.

It forms a cornerstone of the Action Plan drawn up following the publication of the "Changing The Boundaries" report, which concluded that the governance and leadership practices of Cricket Scotland were institutionally racist.

The Review recommends a series of changes to Cricket Scotland's governance structure, the most notable being the adoption of one Board of directors to oversee the running of cricket in Scotland under the parent company limited by guarantee, with a series of Board Sub-Committees operating beneath it.

These Sub-Committees would be tailored to meet the various needs of Cricket Scotland as an organisation and the wider operations of cricket in Scotland, for example Domestic Cricket, High Performance, EDI, and Audit and Risk amongst others.

It is envisaged that the existing membership structure for clubs will remain unchanged. A consultation process with Regional Boards and Member Clubs will be undertaken in the coming weeks, to ensure all voices within Scottish cricket are heard and represented in a transparent, open forum to formulate the detail of the proposed new structures.

We anticipate providing an update at Cricket Scotland's AGM before the end of April to signal these changes, ahead of an SGM to vote them through, held before the end of June.

The adoption of the measures proposed in the Governance Review will create clarity and focus within Cricket Scotland, allowing the organisation to drive ahead in its rebuild, with the clarity of leadership and focus emanating from the restructuring.

In addition to today's overall Governance Review, Cricket Scotland is also publishing Harper MacLeod's independent review of WDCU's handling of disciplinary matters, which was fed into the overall Governance Review. This was another requirement of the "Changing The Boundaries" Action Plan.

EDI Strategy

The formation of an EDI Board Sub-Committee, along with the creation of an Anti-Racism and EDI Advisory Group reporting into the sub-committee, shows the progress made in imprinting an EDI focus upon the organisation.

The Anti-Racism and EDI Advisory Group consists of a wide range of individuals within and out with the game, who possess valuable experience which will help shape our Anti-Racism and EDI strategy going forward.

We are in the process of appointing a new Head of EDI. They will initially be responsible for overseeing the rollout of EDI training to all players, clubs, and regions across Scotland. They will also be key to developing the EDI strategy that will ensure there is no discrimination of any kind in cricket in Scotland.

Referrals Process

To ensure due process and independence, **sportscotland**, Harper MacLeod and Sporting Equals are leading on the current phase of the referrals process.

Whilst the work has been thorough, it has progressed at a slower pace than anticipated. The above-mentioned groups have conducted an initial review and categorised the referrals. They are currently conducting the investigation process, and the most significant referrals will be passed to the Conduct in Sport Panel set up by Cricket Scotland. Once this panel receives the findings, they will adjudicate in a timely manner.

I sympathise with those involved in the process who are seeking a swift resolution. Rest assured; the Cricket Scotland Board are doing everything in their power to enable this to happen.

The Current Challenges

Whilst there are numerous challenges, the below section includes the key issues (in addition to the findings from the “Changing The Boundaries” report).

Resources

The organisation is under resourced for the work it needs to deliver. There is a core team of twenty within Cricket Scotland that is responsible for operating domestic and international cricket, as well as running the day-to-day operations of the organisation.

The current headcount can operate the sport and spend most of their time doing so. However, the organisation lacks the firepower to immediately improve and grow the sport to drive meaningful change.

Most team members work across departments in a variety of roles and there is a lack of specialised focus. Furthermore, the Senior Leadership Team lacks junior support and spends too much time executing lower priority tasks. This leads to inefficiency and challenges morale.

Cash

For more than a year, Cricket Scotland has had cash reserves that are well below the desired level. As such, the organisation is unable to accelerate improvements to the business. A break-even budget has been prepared for 2023 to ensure we do not further erode the cash reserves. At the same time, the team are working hard to unlock several potential opportunities that would drive incremental revenue.

Technology

The firm does not use technology sufficiently, which slows us down. Many outdated processes are in place across functions such as finance and operations. There is significant manual work which drives inefficiencies and increases the risk of errors.

Additionally, the Cricket Scotland website is outdated and requires an overhaul. Whilst there is significant content on the site, it is difficult to navigate and does not easily convey information to stakeholders.

Domestic Cricket

There remains a disconnect between the governing body and its members. While a significant amount of relationship building has been undertaken during the off-season, there is still much work to do to restore trust in this area.

There is also a lack of data and understanding around who plays cricket in Scotland, which is holding back development. Regional and club cricket should be able to generate enough income to run self-sufficiently; these issues will be addressed in the coming weeks.

International Cricket

The Men's and Women's teams do not have enough fixtures. Whilst there is appetite from full nation teams to play Scotland, the delivery model of hosting home fixtures is broken and inefficient. This is in the process of being reviewed given that fixtures will drive commercial revenue and increase awareness.

Our international squads also lack the appropriate facilities and support to accelerate at pace. Whilst we have initially made cost-saving cuts in this department over the past few months, I am under no illusion that investment must be stepped up in the long term to support the Men's and Women's teams and pathways.

Internal Operations Progress Update

Cost Optimisation

The Board have consistently worked on site in Edinburgh since their appointment, due to the pressures placed on the leadership team.

All legacy contracts by the business have been reviewed, resulting in an annualised cost-saving of c.£50,000. Additional key strategic choices resulted in substantial additional cost savings and prevented Cricket Scotland from going into insolvency.

The business is now attempting to live within its means, and a 29% forecast decrease in income for 2023 means the entire organisation is operating on a strict efficiency basis, with limited cash reserves to fall back on.

Finance Department

The finance function within Cricket Scotland is going through an overhaul. This includes introducing market standard technology across invoice and expense management, as well as enhancing the team with outsourced support. The overhaul will drive efficiencies, free up resources, and mitigate risk.

Commercial Department

We have reviewed all commercial assets, constructed exciting sponsorship packages, and launched an out-reach program to raise investment for Cricket Scotland. Thus far, we have secured deals with three new partners to support domestic and pathway activities. We are also working with several global stakeholders to secure international fixtures to drive further revenue.

Whilst we have made progress, it must be noted that there is no dedicated commercial function. A complete overhaul of our commercial approach is required but this will take significant time and investment.

Communications and Digital Marketing Department

The appointment of a new Head of Communications in January has created a vast improvement in consistent messaging internally within the business, as well as with external stakeholders.

The imminent appointment of a Social Media and Marketing Executive will enhance the communications department and increase capacity across Cricket Scotland's social media channels.

Our social channels must be invested in to raise the profile and expand the audience of cricket both within Scotland and on a global basis. Whilst we currently have a large social audience, there is huge scope to increase this and drive further revenue through the monetisation of digital assets.

Human Resources ("HR") Department

An external HR provider, The HR Department, was appointed in December to support the business and its employees moving forward. In the three months since, there has been a full review of all job descriptions and contracts of employment, while tailored

performance and learning/development plans are currently being initiated.

An internal software system, Breathe HR, has been created within which all employees are now active. In addition, two new initiatives have been launched with SAMH, Scotland's mental health charity, one to support staff and the other to offer support to anyone involved in the referrals process.

Professionalisation of Women's Cricket

Despite being a time of financial crisis, the decision was taken to offer professional contracts to our top women players for the first time. This was long overdue and desperately needed at this time to enhance the game in Scotland, given the rapid growth of women's cricket worldwide.

This decision was re-emphasised by the positive impact made by the Scotland Women's U19 squad at the ICC U19 World Cup in January. We look forward to seeing these players flourish in this new era for women's cricket in Scotland.

Professionalisation however is only the beginning. We simply can't afford to fall behind in the development of the women's game, which gives rise to one of the biggest opportunities in global sport. The women's game is a key priority, and we will continue to unlock new opportunities to enhance fixtures.

Domestic Cricket

There has been productive engagement with regional Associations and the Cricket Scotland Match Officials Association during the off-season, with a particular focus on improving communications and understanding of local concerns.

As mentioned above, there is an urgent need for comprehensive data about Scottish cricket to establish base levels of compliance and governance. Work has been ongoing to address this by setting up a membership registration system – these plans will be presented to clubs before the end of March.

Transparency in International Team Selection

Since the publication of the "Changing The Boundaries" report, there has been a review of all selection policies and procedures for Men's

and Women's representative teams, the processes of which have been used rigorously to bring greater transparency for each subsequent squad selection.

Men's Tour to Antigua

As mentioned above, our international teams do not have enough fixtures. Negotiations in Australia last October during the World Cup secured the Men's team a four-week tour to the West Indies. This will form a key part of their preparation for the upcoming ICC World Cup Qualifier, provide further high-level opportunities for our players and will strengthen our relationship with the West Indies Cricket Board.

We have also secured the services of Doug Watson from Auckland Aces as Interim Head Coach until the end of July. Doug will guide our Men's squad through two crucial qualifying tournaments this summer, and we wish him the very best during his time with Cricket Scotland.

ICC World T20 Europe Qualifier

We were delighted to be informed that Scotland will host this prestigious tournament in July in Edinburgh - the first time Scotland has been sole hosts of a Men's ICC qualifying tournament.

Twenty-one matches will take place across nine days and will serve as a high-profile showcase for our Men's squad and the game within Europe.

It will also be a terrific chance to market our product to a wider audience, and we look forward to the opportunities this can bring to the organisation.

Discipline in Cricket

On March 27, the board will approve a series of measures designed to improve and monitor discipline within Scottish cricket. These include:

- A revised Code of Conduct – the standards expected by everyone involved in the game in Scotland
- An updated Complaints Policy & Procedure

- A new Conduct in Sport Panel – an independent group of selected individuals, from which a Conduct Panel of three will be selected if a complaint requires to be adjudicated on

Once approved, these measures will be shared with the Match Officials Association, the Regional Associations and clubs and will be made available on the website in conjunction with other connected policies – including Child Protection & Wellbeing, Safeguarding, Anti-doping, and Anti-corruption.

The imminent appointment of a new Conduct in Sport Manager is a further crucial step in ensuring that the recently established Conduct In Sport Panel can operate at full capacity in time for the start of the new domestic season.

Partnerships

In the autumn Cricket Scotland launched an innovative new partnership with the South Asian Cricket Academy, creating further opportunities for Scottish South Asian players to achieve professional status in both the men's and women's pathway programs.

Development

Our work to grow cricket in communities, schools and at junior level can only be successful with a strong Development team. We are currently recruiting three staff – a Women's and Girls Development Manager, and two positions in Regional Development. It is a priority that we source excellent candidates to fulfil these roles.

Additionally, discussions are ongoing with Lords Taverners and Chance to Shine who have expressed strong interest in scaling their programs further in Scotland.

Immediate Next Steps

Board

Further Board appointments will be made imminently to strengthen the current structure and enable greater strides to be made in all levels of decision-making.

Executive Team

I can today announce that current Interim Chief Executive, Gordon Arthur, is stepping down from the role for personal reasons, and will leave the organisation at the end of April.

Gordon joined Cricket Scotland last July on an initial three-month contract during an extremely challenging time for the sport and was immediately tasked with steering the organisation through the publication of the “Changing The Boundaries” report.

Since then, working with the board and all interested parties, he has stabilised the business and reconstructed positive relationships to ensure Cricket Scotland has a solid framework to move forward ahead of the new domestic season.

On behalf of the Board as well as myself, I would like to put on record our thanks to Gordon for his leadership, tireless efforts and patience during what has been an incredibly difficult and challenging period. The results he has achieved in such a short space of time, with such limited resources, have been hugely commendable, as has the support he has provided to the Board.

Cricket Scotland has today started the process of appointing a new Interim Chief Executive, who will be charged with further improving the efficiency of the business as it drives towards several major landmarks. The recruitment process for a new permanent Chief Executive will take place at the same time; information is available on the Cricket Scotland website for interested candidates.

Senior Team

Whilst we have made good progress on addressing the issues arising from “Changing The Boundaries”, there is more work to be done and this is a top priority. This is why a dedicated and fully focused “Changing The Boundaries” team is being put in place with immediate effect.

A specialist high-level appointment will be made to lead this team and will be supported by several individuals. They will report directly to the CEO with the sole focus of ensuring Cricket Scotland exits special measures as soon as possible.

Conclusion

When I joined the organisation in October 2022, I had massive ambitions for Cricket Scotland. There is clearly significant potential to grow cricket in Scotland and on a global basis.

Whilst I continue to have these ambitions, the demands of implementing the recommendations from the “Changing The Boundaries” report are huge. The three core workstreams are: (i) governance review; (ii) referrals process; (iii) anti-Racism and broader EDI strategy.

For now, these are the core priorities for the Board and senior team. We will deliver the recommendations to a high standard and beyond. Our current trajectory means that we will exit special measures by October 31 and ensure Cricket Scotland continues its work towards becoming the most inclusive sport in the country over the long term.

Whilst delivering the recommendations of the “Changing The Boundaries” report is of paramount importance, we cannot deliver meaningful change across the sport if these are the only issues we solve.

As such, we are also working on a comprehensive restructuring of Cricket Scotland. This includes improving the foundational issues that exist such as lack of resources, cash, technology, fixtures and the relationship with domestic clubs in Scotland.

I have met several stakeholders in my first six months and will continue to do so over the summer. Cricket is a great way of bringing people together. It is vital that the Scottish cricketing community are brought together, and work together to improve the sport.

Whilst the immediate future will remain significantly challenging, I am incredibly optimistic about the long-term future of Cricket Scotland. I would urge you all to join Cricket Scotland on this journey of radically improving the sport. It is going to take time, there will be change and we will face numerous hurdles. However, a lot of impressive work has been conducted in a short space of time, and the ambition levels are high.

ANJAN LUTHRA
Chair, Cricket Scotland