Yorkshire Cricket Southern Premier League

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Premier Section committee meeting

Wednesday 5 August 2026 – 19.30 by Teams

Note of meeting

Present: Mark Beardshall, Jason Booth, Mick Forrester, David Jones, Roger Pugh, Steve Ward

Apologies: Alex Fletcher, Andy Harrison, Neil Vaughan

1. **Welcome & apologies**. RP welcomed members and passed on apologies.

2. **Matters arising from last meeting and update on action points.** There were no outstanding issues from the last meeting.

3. **Expansion of the Premier Section**. RP confirmed that the primary reason for the inclusion of Divisions 1 & 2 in the Premier Section was to reduce the Senior Section workload. In addition, the change also makes sense in relation to rules, because the objective is that these divisions will, wherever possible, follow the same rules as the Premier & Championship divisions.

4. **Points cap system**

   i. RP said that the proposal was passed at the EGM on 9 July. The next step is the creation of a Points Cap Sub-Committee to oversee its operations. Its role will be twofold:

   - at the beginning of the season to scrutinise and verify the lists from the clubs
   - decide on any issues that arise out of the operation of the system as the season moves forward

   RP said that he would chair the sub-committee and asked for two volunteers to join him.

   Action: volunteers to be part of the Points Cap Sub-Committee to let RP know.

   ii. Chris Froggett suggested that special considerations be given for a club that loses a large number of players and needs to recruit much more widely than would be the norm. RP said that this can be covered in the changes to the Competition Rules required for the Points Cap system at the AGM. **RP to take forward.**

   iii. Whilst we must be diligent in ensuring that the values allocated by clubs to their players are correct, the system is likely to be self-policing.

   iv. The intention is to roll the system out for Divisions 1 & 2 once it is operating satisfactorily in the top two divisions.

5. **Sunday cup-ties**. RP stressed that we value the cups and want clubs to participate in them, but only if they want to do so. If clubs are really struggling to put out competitive Sunday sides, we shouldn't be making life more difficult for them. Following the last meeting, he raised the subject at the LEB and with colleagues from YPLN:

   i. At the LEB there was strong opposition to making the Whitworth and Mick Savage cups 'opt out', particularly from the Competitions Secretary, who argued that we should not put forward a proposal on

the basis of requests from a couple of clubs. Taking that into account, RP will speak to the clubs who raised the issue, and suggest that they put forward a proposal themselves. **RP to take forward.**

ii. When RP spoke to Graham Hursthouse, Graham said that YPLN clubs are still not keen on the idea of making the K3 'opt out'. He suggested that we revisit the issue after this year's final, and explore a possible proposal along the lines of, 'where participation may cause significant issues for a club, exemption may be considered'. **RP & SW to speak to YPLN colleagues after the K3 final.**

iii. At the EGM, there were suggestions made that the first round of the K3 could be played on the Saturday before the start of the season and that it could be zoned**.** After further consideration we decided not to pursue these; firstly, because of the ground availability issues, and, secondly, because the idea of the K3 in the first place was to provide competition between top teams in the north and the south, and zoning is contrary to that.

iv. There was a clear consensus at the EGM that the T20 should be played on a straight knock-out basis in a given week, with the opportunity given to play games either in mid-week or on Sunday.

6. **Composition of divisions**

i. RP said that the issue of ten-team Premier and Championship divisions had been raised at the last two committee meetings, without any conclusion. He asked the committee for a decision on whether this was something they wished to pursue.

ii. DJ said that if we have ten-team divisions, there will be more Saturdays available for cups and T20. He strongly believes that there are not 60 teams in Yorkshire of Premier Division quality. He also reiterated his belief that all Premier Leagues should play to the same rules.

iii. MF said that he thought it could give greater flexibility around cups and T20, particularly if YPLN came on board in respect of the K3, and it would enable us to start the season a week later.

iv. JB was in favour, but felt that we need to take the opportunity to ensure that grounds and facilities are given more weight in terms of qualification for Premier Division cricket, which he felt is the one area that has regressed in recent years. He believed that needs readdressing because poor facilities lead to poor cricket, and to poor performance.

v. MB said that he was very much in favour of ten-team divisions, but did not necessarily want to see the cups and T20 played at the start, because if a team is out of both competitions early, and has no chance of winning the league, their season could be over. He also expressed the view that the T20 should be played in better weather, saying that cup/T20 games should come after five or six league games. MB also said that he would very much like to see 'one up, one down' promotion introduced at the same time, potentially with a play-off for the second place.

vi. The clear majority view was that the committee wished to put forward a ten-team divisions proposal. RP agreed to produce a proposal first to go to committee, then to LEB and to the AGM. **Action: RP to produce proposal**.

7. **Grounds & facilities**

i. JB suggested that in the short to medium term we need to revisit the issue of playing facilities and update our criteria. If we are going to consider facilities as part of criteria for playing in the Premier Division, we have an opportunity to start that process now, so that two or three years down the line, clubs are aware of what is required. If there is a substandard facility, we should monitor it and there should be a plan for improvement.

ii. RP agreed and said that we should have a Grounds & Facilities Sub-committee, whose responsibility it is to follow up on areas of concern reported.

Action: volunteers to be part of the Grounds & Facilities Sub-committee to let RP know.

iii. RP asked if our Grounds & Facilities document requires any amendment. DJ said that:

- The wide guidelines need to be included.
- The viewing area for players should not be blocked by 'spectators'. RP said that he had been to Ackworth, where the club are now engaging a couple of stewards to ensure that spectator behaviour is controlled. He was very impressed and thought others should copy.

iv. RP raised the issue of the inconsistency of umpires ground marks, saying that he believed that the questions on reports need to be made clearer, so that umpires had better yardsticks for marking. He also questioned whether the umpires are necessarily the best people to be doing the markings, and wondered whether the markings should be done by visiting captains.

v. DJ suggested that, to get a full picture, facilities such as scoreboards and sightscreens should be included, with scorers contributing for scoring facilities and away captains for changing facilities.

vi. JB agreed that markings should include scoring facilities, umpires and changing facilities, and that we need to look at the criteria currently in place and update them. He felt that this should be done for the Premier and Championship divisions, but if we are looking at clubs who may qualify for Premier League cricket in the future, we should include Divisions 1 & 2 as well.

vii. JB felt that the area where we have let ourselves down is holding clubs accountable for their facilities. He felt that we now have a great opportunity, from the start of next season, to get a real benchmark of where all the clubs are. JB suggested getting Ian Mather-Brewster from the GMA involved to help design new grounds and facilities criteria. RP agreed that would be very useful.

Action: JB to speak to IMB and set up a call.

8. **Other business**

i. ***YCCC***. MB said that closer co-operation with YCCC is needed around fixtures. He said that quite often we are playing a T20 weekend on the same weekend that Yorkshire have got an Academy T20 cup or a T20 warm-up. Whilst it is recognised that these are ECB competitions, better communication would help.

ii. MB said that it should also be recognised that, as a league, we have a very proud history and tradition of producing players that go on to play at the very highest levels. Sheffield Collegiate, in particular, being very notable in producing two England captains. The pyramid system that the ECB championed should now be backed up in deeds.

iii. More generally, he said that he knew of players picked for Yorkshire's second team games on the basis that they are in the YCCC setup but their performances for their clubs did not warrant a call up. Similarly, if somebody's doing really well in the league who is not in the system, there's no reward for them now. He believed that that there should be an intrinsic link between YCCC and the Premier Leagues.

Action: RP to follow up with Richard Wilkinson.

iv. ***ECB review of Premier Leagues.*** RP gave some background on the ongoing review, covering their purpose and remit, and including accreditation and funding. He outlined some of the concerns of PL chairmen, including the need for accreditation to be simplified to reduce administrative burdens; the demands being made by ECB on participation initiatives; the knock-on demands on ground capacity and volunteers; and the difficulties faced by those clubs who are in areas with a high number of clubs, who are all 'fishing in the same pond'. RP said that he had put forward some standardisation of PL playing conditions as an issue, but was not expecting much support. He said that he would keep the committee updated.

v. MB said that the funding was not a great issue, more important was greater cohesion between the PLS, county boards and the ECB, both upwards and downwards. He felt that communication within the League was an 'open door' but that there is a 'glass ceiling' at county level and at the ECB. There should be a more transparent mechanism for raising escalating issues from leagues to county boards and on to ECB.

vi. ***YCSPL representative teams***. JB thanked MF for his support with the representative team fixtures. The players had really enjoyed the games and were a credit to the clubs. MF said that they had also played some very good cricket. JB suggested that a letter be sent to the clubs to thank their players for supporting the games and saying that they were a credit to themselves and their clubs. The players said they would be interested in playing two or three fixtures a season, if possible. MF said that Treeton could not have been any more hospitable, especially considering that they stepped in at short notice, and that we need to formally thank them. JB said that we should arrange an addition game if possible.

Action: RP & SW to take forward letter to clubs and arranging an additional fixture.

vii. ***League administration, social media & sponsorship***. RP reported that Melvin Bond has decided to stand down as League Play-Cricket administrator, and recognized the huge amount of work he has done in this area. The concern is that we won't find another volunteer to do all the work that Melvin has done. He has

put some incredible hours in, often because clubs have not done what they should have. RP went on to say that he thought Melvin might only be the first in a potential line of people who may come to this decision, and given all the demands on club volunteers, it will become harder to fill these roles.

viii. RP felt that the day will come when we will have pay someone to provide necessary administrative support. Already in Yorkshire three of the other Premier Leagues do that. But rather than employ someone, RP felt that a formalised agreement of paying for an agreed amount of work done, may be the best way forward. However, at the moment, the only way we could do that would be to divert all the ECB funding, which the LEB agreed we do not want to do.

ix. We therefore need to redouble our efforts to find a sponsorship. The initial work that we are doing on this is around social media, because everybody tells us that the first thing that a potential sponsor will look at will be our social media, and we are currently behind several other leagues. A small steering group has been created to develop a strategy and oversee its introduction. Part of this will be to increase the number of people in the league who will provide content. The draft strategy will be presented to LEB on 7 September for endorsement.

9. **Close**. RP thanked all for their attendance and input, and the meeting closed at 8.55pm. The next meeting will be on Wednesday 7 October.