



Dear Mr Collier-Keywood

Firstly, congratulations on your new role as Chair of the Welsh Rugby Union. We wish you well and hope that you will bring forward the much-needed change in the culture and vision of our governing body.

We realise you will have a demanding agenda at the start of your new role, but we want to ensure you are aware of our concerns about the future of the professional game in Wales.

The CF10 Rugby Trust is a community benefit society formed in May 2016 by passionate Cardiff supporters. We are a democratic and representative organisation open to all supporters of Cardiff Rugby and Cardiff RFC.

We are proud to say that we have achieved a lot since our formation including:

- Building a membership now approaching 900
- Lobbying successfully for a supporter representative on the board of Cardiff Rugby
- Ensuring there is regular dialogue with Cardiff Rugby in which we bring the views of the supporters to the forefront
- Being a key driver in the protection of the proud heritage of Cardiff Rugby including creating a world class online museum
- Being the proxy for many members who hold shares in Cardiff Rugby to the extent that we are the 8th largest shareholder in the company.

We are proud of these achievements, but it is with the future in mind that we are writing to you today.

It has been a difficult few years, not least because of the delay in agreeing the PRA and its associated requirements. We knew that 2023-4 was not going to be an easy season with the inevitable cuts arising directly from that agreement. We were prepared for that. What we were not prepared for was the continuing undermining of the four professional clubs by the WRU. Our members cannot fathom the rationale behind the proposals to play a Barbarians game immediately in the wake of the World Cup and on the same weekend as the Scarlets v Cardiff derby nor the

proposal to allow Bristol Bears v Gloucester to play at the Principality Stadium (also on the same weekend as another derby.) We can see that, in the short-term, selling tickets to the former and receiving a six-figure fee for allowing the latter theoretically brings extra funds into the game (unless they too are diverted into unwanted capital projects). However, in the longer term, devaluing a regional derby does nothing to restore faith in and interest in the pro game. The optics of promoting a clash from a rival league at our national ground whilst simultaneously cutting the payments to our own professional teams to the bone is, quite frankly, staggering; even more so if it is played on the same weekend as a Cardiff home match. It creates, or perhaps confirms, the impression that our governing body sees the professional game below Team Wales as expendable.

We want our governing body to see part of their role as helping facilitate a thriving domestic game and not just place its sole emphasis on the national side, as has been the case for the last decade or more

The WRU have said that they expect the four Welsh teams to try and drive up their own matchday and sponsorship revenue. This was a common demand rolled out throughout the endless discussions between the clubs and WRU which was at the centre of this year's crisis. Yet these decisions seem to fly in the face of that aim. It is to be remembered that in the URC there are now only nine home matches. In Europe, there are now only two home matches. No business can be reasonably expected to thrive when it is only able to open up to customers on eleven occasions in the year and even then, frequently prevented from putting its best products on display.

Part of the logic of a diminished fixture list, supposedly, was to allow each match to gain more importance and allow the competing teams to play their strongest team more often. The WRU seem to have already forgotten about this in the name of short-term thinking.

It seems to us there is no wider strategy for the Welsh pro game beyond finding new ways to squeeze every last drop of income from the Principality Stadium, regardless of the long-term costs to the game as a whole.

As part of the JSG Cymru our Chair is looking forward to meeting you on the 9th August if, as we hope, you honour the commitment of the previous Chair for quarterly meetings. However, we believe that this matter is of such urgency that we hope that you will find the time to reassess the rationale that has led to the possibility of the undermining of our regional games by these two proposed events.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Lynn Glaister
on behalf of CF10 Rugby Trust Board
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