**Present**

Sensi, Peta, Jo, Hannah, Ev (online), Lizzie (online), Bridie, Maria, Vic, Vanesa, Mari, Silvia, Cris, Frances, Isy O, Kate (online), Alice (online), Daniela

**Apologies**

Wendy, Nat Smith, Becs, Ange

**Minutes from Cowgirls meeting on 22/05/23**

\* This meeting consisted more of a much-needed discussion rather than ‘getting through all the points on the agenda’.

As such, there are a lot of notes. If you’d prefer to skim read them, the action points are highlighted in yellow.

For more sensitive issues, name of speaker has been changed to ‘someone’ (or if I can’t remember who said it.)

**What we hoped to get through**

1. Summer tournaments EMAIL BROADCAST
2. Training in general DISCUSSED.
3. Cowfolk constitution and how to ensure folk agree to it DISCUSSED.
4. FA coach and player Code of Conduct TOUCHED ON
5. Concerns/complaints procedures DISCUSSED.
6. Summer training location (Oldbury vs Eastville vs Anywhere Else) HANNAH TO CREATE INTERNET POLL FOR PEOPLE TO VOTE ON LOCATION
7. Potential Sponsorship by Radical Roasters (Peta) NEXT MEETING
8. Socials (Ev) NEXT MEETING

**What we got through**

Minutes

Sensi states ground rules: when people are talking, be respectful and let them speak. Don’t arrive to a meeting intoxicated. Please remember that this is constructive feedback.

1. Coaching / Training

* Sensi gives intro: It was spilt by beginner / intermediate. There were talks about the circle being too long. Thoughts?
* Some attendees state longer introductions make it easier to remember everyone’s names, especially if we’re opening up to new players.

Action 1: We should do a circle in which everyone states names / pronouns again when we open up again.

* Going outdoors soon – could we have a longer match?
* If we’re having newbies / beginners join soon, we should make sure we include a bit about how to safe tackle.

Action 2: Sensi/Hannah will ask if Mark can do a drill on safe tackling when we open up.

* Some people liked having the choice between two sessions at training. Vic thought Leilah’s were more dynamic and energetic. Mark’s were slower and had more of a focus on footwork.
* Someone stated we always used to talk about the fact it’s not just the coach who has the responsibility to induct new people and talk to people who are playing more aggressively. All cowgirls should set a good example and talk to people.
* Some people said it’s great learning new skills then having to use them in a game. They really like this aspect of training.
* Some people stated that alternating between either coach each work might work well because it would give each coach complete control over their own session.

Action 3: If we were to get a new coach again a more formal induction process will be used. We would also need to discuss what would best work for the two coaches in term of organising sessions (run same session jointly or alternate between weeks).

1. Cow Folk Constitution

* We need to get back into handing out the welcome leaflet to new players, with a link to the constitution.
* Lizzie suggested to get someone to print some out and then laminate them, ready to hand out at training. We should also put the info in docs on the info chat so any new players who join can see them.

Action 4: Sal / Lizzie and/or Silvia to print and laminate up to date welcome leaflet. A chair to put the info on Info chat when we open up again.

* Suggestions: the committee is the committee, yes, but other players should be more proactive in respectfully informing committee members about tensions and issues they see building.
* Sally stated, the constitution and guidelines have been going well over the years, but something slipped a bit with the recent incident / build up.
* Someone said it should be clearer and more transparent, from the start. Get people to sign up. We could have a ‘2 strikes’ and you’re out situation.
* There is a Cowfolk complaints procedure, but this should be merged with the cowgirls one. Some people want things to be more transparent with the complaint’s procedure.

Action 5: Sensi or Hannah to add general cow complaints procedure to Cowgirls’ constitution, so all can read when they go through the constitution.

* A question: If there’s an incident that could possibly go against the values of the club. Who decides if this will be taken through the formal complaint’s procedure? At what point does the Committee say, this is right or this is wrong?
* It would be better, if we get people involved in conflict to speak to each other in a more informal situations to resolve things rather than get the wider committee involved. Hannah stated that this is usually done, but because the most recent incident happened at training, it had to be taken more seriously.
* It was agreed the future, issues like this should be kept between the chair(s) / vice chair.
* People asking what steps were taken after incident?
* Sensi / Peta explained the cooling off period and letters sent to parties involved. She also explained how the incident made people feel unsafe.
* Bullying within the club? People of course, did not like the idea of this,
* People stated that they wish both parties were here to discuss things from their perspective.
* Mari thought that as a group, we didn’t do enough to help a player / new coach who was struggling.
* Someone stated that the double blow of being given the cooling off period and having coaching questioned, would have been too much for anyone and they’d want to take a step back.
* Sensi raised the fact there was no formal ‘introduction’ to being a coach was given.
* Someone felt like there wasn’t enough done to resolve a conflict from a previous incident. Someone questioned if we’d ever consider going to an outside mediator to facilitate people’s discussions over frictions that occur. They questioned whether old friendships might make it harder for things to change.
* We questioned if ‘the bigger / underlying tensions’ should be made public in the meeting. The committee decided that it wouldn’t be fair on people involved to share these details. We should check with them before we hold this meeting.
* Some people stated that certain behaviours are perhaps normalised because of how long people have been involved. They questioned if outside mediation to help with this.
* Sally states she doesn’t believe some behaviours are being normalised and that everyone is on a journey, it shouldn’t be ‘two strikes then you’re out’, as it’s an inclusive group that helps people grow within their own abilities, background and context.
* Ev states that you can’t help everyone if they choose to leave. However, it’s sad when they do.
* Someone thanks Sally for sharing personal story, and states they don’t want to ‘kick people out’
* It was mentioned that making people feel ‘bad / under pressure’ due to needing to pay for external mediation is a bad idea.
* People viewing the club as anarchist / something else, debate about whether we should bring external people in or not.
* Finishing idea, Despite the issue we’re dealing with in this chat, there is a lot of great stuff and brilliant connection that comes out of the club.

Other possible solutions

1. Lizzie: Stronger, clearer and more trusting communication channels.
2. Sally: appoint a pastoral care person?
3. Vic: Make it clearer who is on the committee once a month or so.
4. Keep separate roles, two chairs and social secretaries.
5. Hannah to send out a monthly anonymous suggestions box which people can use to give feedback about training.

Action 6: Committee to think about if past grievances are leading to people feeling unsafe and tension in the club. Check if people are happy for past details being shared. Then, hold an all cowgirls meeting on this.

Action 7: If all parties agree for above cow meeting goes ahead, committee to decide if we should resolve these frictions by a) finding a voluntary mediation service b) finding a paid mediation service c) having an open meeting about it in the pub / community centre d) appointing a pastoral care person (maybe from inside the club or from the cowboys) \* committee to research which options are viable first

Action 8: Committee to state who they are monthly at training, email monthly, reminding players they are there and who they are and that they can bring any concerns to the chairs / vice chair.

Other actions

* Action 9: Hannah or Sensi to create online pole to decide which park for summer training location.
* Action 10: Possible date for end of season awards, 17th June, a chair to collect and engrave trophies.
* Action 11: Lizzie to send a broadcast email to announce summer tournaments.
* Action 12: Peta to further research getting information on how radical roasters can sponsor the team. Would anyone like to help her?