



Birmingham County Football Association

Referee Advisory Group (RAG) - Terms of Reference

Purpose

The purpose of the RAG is to provide informed advice and guidance to Birmingham County Football Association (BCFA) by supporting the BCFA Refereeing team with the strategic direction in several key areas including, but not limited to, Progression Pathway, Mentoring, Fees, and Youth Refereeing.

The RAG will discuss issues and formulate solutions; share ideas and good practice; inform and educate staff and volunteers; develop strategies and policies with regard to refereeing targets for the business and local grassroots game; engage and network to help increase referee recruitment and retention.

Role

The role of the RAG is to:

- Support BCFA with strategic direction of County FA Refereeing.
- Oversight of BCFA County Cup Final Appointments.
- Adopt regulatory role of BCFA Referees' Committee, as defined in FA Referee Regulations.
- Consult on operational direction of 2024-2027 Refereeing Strategy.
- Support with decision making processes and consultation amongst BCFA Registered Match Officials.

Means

In supporting the role as defined above, the Referee Advisory Group may:

1. Analyse data to provide intelligence and support recommendations to the County FA.
2. Consult on and support the county planning process, including the setting of business objectives and targets which ensure that the needs of the whole refereeing community are met.
3. Act as Ambassadors as appropriate for the Birmingham County FA.
4. Bring a diverse perspective to the Birmingham County FA.
5. Identify key equality issues and support the identification and delivery of solutions.
6. Advocate the benefits of addressing equality issues.
7. Assess and advise on matters relating to the four secondary refereeing measures.
8. Co-ordinate consultation sessions with the wider community in relation to annual operational plans.
9. Appoint task and finish groups for specific initiatives.
10. Suggest and commission research.

RAG Membership

The CORE RAG membership shall consist:

- Board Director (INED)
- Referee Development Officer or equivalent
- Referee Development Assistant or equivalent
- Football Development Manager or equivalent
- Safeguarding Manager (when required)
- Aspiring Club Co-Ordinator (Referee)
- Referee Development Group Co-Ordinator or equivalent
- Minimum of 8 and Maximum of 12 x Independent Match Officials.
- Critical Friends and/or influencers – as defined and as invited.

The RAG will be supplemented by externally recruited 'Critical Friends' who will provide external scrutiny of the RAG's work. Critical friends will not be required to attend meetings but will be sent updated action plans and an updated review via online 'smartsheets' of the RAG's work on a quarterly basis. Critical friends will be required to read and comment upon the information with ideas and suggestions and/or contacts to be made. No limit will be set on the number of critical friends who will all receive a brief detailing the purpose of their role. Critical friends will be invited to RAG events and may also be invited to specific RAG meetings if the group deem it necessary.

From time to time, the RAG may wish to recruit Task and Finish members who will be invited to the group to undertake specific, time limited actions. Task and Finish group members may be paid for their involvement if suitable volunteer participants cannot be attracted. In addition, it may be agreed by the RAG/Board to commission specific work out to a Task & Finish group member or an outside agency. Ideally, three quotes will be required and Task & Finish members and/or Critical Friends MUST declare any conflict of interest prior to the any decision being made.

Role of the RAG Chair:

The RAG shall elect a chair from its number. The Chair's role is:

1. To preside over meetings so that business can be carried out efficiently and effectively;
2. To provide leadership to the RAG;
3. To develop the agenda for each meeting along with the Referee Development Officer or equivalent.
4. To ensure that the work of the RAG and any issues and targets are regularly reported to the Board.
5. To ensure through management of the agenda that all voices have an opportunity to be heard

The term of office for the Chair is one year with an option to renew up to three years. The Chair must not be directly contracted by Birmingham County Football Association.

RAG Secretary

1. This position will be held by the Referee Development Assistant or equivalent.
2. If the Referee Development Assistant or equivalent is not in attendance, then the Secretary will be selected through an open process at the start of the meeting.

Frequency of meetings and Agenda

Meetings will take place quarterly. The Chair is required to liaise with Referee Development Officer or equivalent and Secretary when setting dates and agendas for meetings.

RAG members must submit the agenda items two weeks prior to the meeting. The meeting notice and agenda will be electronically distributed one week in advance of each meeting. Meeting minutes will be produced, agreed by the Chair and distributed within ten days of the date of the meeting.

Meetings of the RAG may be held in person, by telephone conference call or web conferencing or by such means as the Chair determines.

Quorum

A minimum of six members are required for each meeting – either in person and/or online.

Budget

The RAG has responsibility for ensuring all expenditure is in line with the Operational Plans, KPI's and Business objectives alongside the annual budget approved by the Board. Any additional expenditure must be submitted for the consideration and approval of the Board.

Review

The RAG shall review its Terms of Reference as and when required by the Board of Directors. The terms of reference must be approved by the Board before being used or altered.