

Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee

Oral evidence: The Future of English Cricket, HC 73

Wednesday 23 October 2019

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Members present: Damian Collins (Chair); Clive Efford; Julian Knight; Ian C. Lucas; Jo Stevens; Giles Watling.

Questions 1 - 178

Witnesses

I: Colin Graves, Chairman, England and Wales Cricket Board, Tom Harrison, Chief Executive, England and Wales Cricket Board, Clare Connor, Managing Director, Women's Cricket, England and Wales Cricket Board, and Lord Patel of Bradford OBE, Senior Independent Non-Executive Director, England and Wales Cricket Board.

II: Laura Cordingley, Chief Executive, Chance to Shine, Andy Nash, former chairman of Somerset County Cricket Club, Chris Willetts, co-founder, Platform Cricket, and Becky Fairlie-Clarke, Co-founder, Cricket Supporter's Association.

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Colin Graves, Tom Harrison, Clare Connor and Lord Patel of Bradford.

Chair: Good afternoon and welcome to this evidence session of the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee on the future of cricket. Before we start, I know that some Members have interests in cricket clubs that they want to declare ahead of the session.

Jo Stevens: I am a member of Glamorgan Country Cricket Club and Surrey Country Cricket Club.

Julian Knight: I refer Members to my entry in the Register of Members' Financial Interests. I am also a member of Worcestershire County Cricket Club.

Q1 **Chair:** I am a member of the Marylebone Cricket Club. That is our declarations out the way.

We are grateful to the ECB for joining us for this evidence session. We have taken evidence from the governing bodies of a number of sports in this country before, so it is great to have a chance to do that with cricket. Cricket has gone through a period of substantial change in terms of its governance arrangements, and this gives us a chance to discuss those issues.

Given that we normally see the FA, of all the national governing bodies, we do not often see trophies in the Committee Room, so we are delighted to see on display the women's and men's World Cups, held by England as they are.

Colin Graves, can you give the Committee an introduction to how the ECB is set up now and outline some of the governance changes you have brought into force?

Colin Graves: Thank you, Chair, and thank you to the Committee for inviting us today and giving us this opportunity to share with you our vision for cricket in the future. It is great to be sat here with two world trophies, as the Chairman said. It is an ambition that we set out four and a half years ago, and achieving that has been fantastic.

A lot of people do not realise how the ECB is formed and who owns the ECB. The ECB has 41 stakeholders. Of those, 18 are first-class counties—17 of those 18 are members' clubs, and one is privately owned. There are then 21 other county cricket boards owned and run by a lot of volunteers—boards like Cheshire, Northumberland and Devon. The other two stakeholders are the MCC and the Minor Counties Cricket Association. Those are our 41 stakeholders.

Before we can change anything in cricket—whether our constitution or our articles of association—the board has to go to those stakeholders. That is what we have done on two occasions over the last three years. It is

important that you understand where we have come from and why we went that route.

First, it was to introduce a new tournament into our county schedule. We took that to our 41 stakeholders. After hours and hours of discussion with them over nearly a year, that vote went through 38-3, so there was substantial support for that new competition. The actual Hundred itself, which I am sure we will come on to later, was then taken as a concept to the counties to vote on, as the professional playing game. The new Hundred went through 17-1, again after a lot of consultation and many hours of discussion with their boards, committees and everybody else.

The last big thing that we did, two years ago, was to change our governance model in accordance with Sport England requirements. Again, after a year and a half of discussion with all our stakeholders, that went through on a vote of 41-nil. Our new governance model at the ECB surpasses Sport England's expectations. We now have four women, out of a board of 12. I believe that we are in a fantastic place compared to where we were four and a half years ago.

Q2 Chair: You mentioned The Hundred, and a number of members have questions on that. We will come to that later. Lord Patel, did you want to say something?

Lord Patel: I joined about four years ago, and I am phenomenally excited about where cricket is today. Not only have we produced what I believe is an excellent strategy for 2020 to 2024 that is rooted in and looks across the game, but, as Colin mentioned, the governance changes have been really extensive. We have surpassed the Sport England code of governance. We have a fully independent board with enough cricket expertise. We have a system in place that will allow us to continue to engage and to speak, and a phenomenal staff team, which, I must say, is supported by five years of financial stability—that is really important. We also have 42,000 volunteers in the network. The result is that we get these trophies.

Q3 Chair: On the board structure itself, one thing that strikes me as being substantially different from the Football Association's board is that there is no representation at the moment for the 18 first-class counties, whereas on the football board, the national game and the professional game have separate representation. Lord Patel, as the senior independent director, do you think that is something that should change? Should there be an individual county representative, or someone chosen by the counties to represent them?

Lord Patel: My experience of representative councils, in a number of environments, has always shown me that having representatives on a board does not always lead to the best outcomes. We have a unitary board that is focused on the outcome of the organisation and, in this case, cricket, with expertise in relevant areas. Out of the 12 members, we have the chief exec and the chief financial officer, five independent people with cricket knowledge, including an ex-England fast bowler, and four people



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who obviously have a passion for cricket but are not connected to cricket in any way, shape or form. For me, that has certainly given us far more transparency and clarity about where we are going, and decision making has been much improved from when I first joined.

- Q4 **Chair:** But it is unusual, in a way, that the 18 first-class counties do not necessarily have a voice on the board, so to speak. One of the minor counties has that seat, in a way.

Lord Patel: I absolutely agree. My view, and other people's views—we had three independent reviews that helped us to come to this conclusion—is that having one person from one county is not the best way to engage. The best way to engage is to engage with all the people. All the board members have four counties that we buddy with, and we swap every year, so we are constantly out there listening, talking and engaging. We have first-class chairmen's meetings regularly. We have chief executives' meetings regularly. Last year, we held our first complete professional game group board. I think it is really important that we constantly engage and do not forget the recreational game in that, and the volunteers as well.

- Q5 **Chair:** Clare Connor, as a consequence of the success of the men's and women's teams, is this is a moment to increase engagement with cricket? What do you see as being the opportunities for engagement, to get more women playing cricket? It seems already that, at school level, cricket is becoming the kind of default summer sport, replacing traditional games such as rounders. What do you see as being the opportunities for women's cricket at the moment?

Clare Connor: I think it is the biggest opportunity we have ever had, as a sport, across both the men's and women's games. When we won the women's World Cup in 2017, a lot of people said to me in interviews that it would be a watershed moment for women's cricket in this country. I remember saying at the time that we will only know that when we look back and see whether we made sure that it was.

The platform of winning that World Cup and the full house at Lords, and the engagement and the 180 million people watching around the world showed us that there is huge optimism and appetite for women's sport in this country, particularly women's cricket—more than ever before. We also see that when we follow the fortunes of the Lionesses and other women's sports teams.

That has given us the opportunity to put together a very comprehensive plan for the next five years. Transforming women's and girls' cricket is one of six priorities within "Inspiring Generations", our new strategy. That plan will see £20 million invested over the next two years, with the board stating an ambition to invest £50 million over five years. Those are huge numbers going into women's sport. That plan will also see us look to increase the representation of women and girls across the sport in all areas, whether in playing, coaching or other workforce roles. It will also see the introduction of more secondary school opportunities for girls,



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probably in association with Chance to Shine, who I know you are speaking to later. We will create a new professional structure for domestic female players. Next year, we will have three times as many professional female players in this country as we have ever had.

I think it is really important that we take very seriously that that investment should work for the whole pathway. Of that £20 million, there will be equal investment in participation and performance. I have had a lifetime in the game—I have been a teacher, I have coached cricket, I have played for England and I have worked for the ECB for nine years—and I have certainly never been more excited by what is ahead of us.

Q6 Chair: I am a Kent MP, and Kent regards itself as one of the leading counties for women's cricket. Do you think there are areas of the country where there is more of a job to be done and more focus needed to support the development of women's cricket?

Clare Connor: We have got a long way to go, without doubt. We are underrepresented on and off the pitch in our sport. However, I think we now have a very serious commitment at every level of the organisation to change that. We have a strategy for growth. We have seen that this is our biggest growth opportunity across the game. We have seen the number of clubs grow from 550 in 2015 to 850 now, but we still know that that is only about 15% of our overall club number. There are pockets of the country that have not really engaged well enough with the women's and girls' game, but that has to come from us. To secure this trophy, what we have done well over the last five years is invest really well in the elite end of the women's game, through professional contracts for England and the development of the Kia Super League. Now is the time to really make sure that we are growing the game in terms of participants across clubs up and down the country.

Lord Patel: To add something that is really important, in terms of women and girls, I will give one example. On the back of our very successful south Asian strategy, we now have funds to recruit 2,000 south Asian women across four years to become mentors and cricket coaches. Three months ago, at Bradford Park Avenue, we had 600 people watching 44 women from England, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka playing cricket at Park Avenue. Those women ranged from A&E doctors to solicitors to students to unemployed people. I have never seen it before, and I have lived there all my life. It was an amazing sight, and it proved that we are just beginning to hit something that we never thought we could.

Q7 Chair: Tom Harrison, do you feel that this is a sort of national moment for men's cricket on the back of the World Cup victory?

Tom Harrison: Yes, I do. This summer has obviously given us a fantastic platform to grow from, which is exciting. Going into hosting a men's cricket World Cup is a once-in-a-generation opportunity; we had not had the opportunity since '99 and we will not have the opportunity again for a very long time. However, we now have the opportunity to take advantage of that, and to be ready for the bounce that comes out of a year like that.



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I think we are really well set up to go forward and implement “Inspiring Generations” as a strategy for the next five years. I actually feel that the next five years—with financial stability, with a transformational reach profile for the game in respect of media, with clubs that feel engaged and excited about the future and with a plan to grow the game, so that we can go back to market in a few years’ time and demonstrate that we have grown the sport in an incredibly competitive environment—will be a very exciting time.

Q8 Chair: Some people have compared this summer with the 2005 Ashes series. In some ways, while that was an amazing triumph, it did not lead to a renaissance in cricket in this country. If anything, it was a decline. Some people might say that one of the reasons for that was the switch from free-to-air television to pay TV. Why do you think that 2005, which was the start of an era of improved success for the England test team, was also the start of an era of declining financial success for the counties and declining attendance at the grounds?

Tom Harrison: It is a complex issue. If you look at where the game was in 2005, we had very different issues. We needed to invest a lot in stadia. We needed to provide an environment where our stadia could get up to scratch. We needed to provide an environment where professional cricketers in this country felt that it was an aspirational career at all levels and that they wanted to be professional cricketers. There was work to be done around that. The fruits of what was sown back then—you do not get the kind of success that we have seen over the past few years, obviously culminating in the men’s World Cup this summer and the women’s World Cup in 2017, without substantial investment.

The decline to which you are referring is a more complex issue. We are dealing with enormous lifestyle changes. We are seeing the kinds of figures that other sports are also facing in respect of challenges around participating. I feel that we are better placed than we have ever been to address those challenges through the plan that we have built.

As Clare has outlined, there is excitement around women’s cricket and girls’ cricket around the country, as well as the huge impact we are having in schools, which you rightly pointed out, and the exciting plans we have to build on that. We also have massive investment into the county game over the next five years, putting £500 million into our core network over the next five years. I think it is a time to be very optimistic about the potential for us to put cricket on a very firm footing over the next few years.

Q9 Chair: A lot of the buzz around the World Cup final was the fact that it was on Channel 4. When was the decision made that it would be jointly broadcast with Channel 4 and Sky?

Tom Harrison: Ultimately, the ICC rights are ICC-owned and marketed. Clearly, we have got a very close relationship with Sky. We had conversations leading into the World Cup contemplating what might happen were England to be successful throughout the tournament and get



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towards the latter stages. Going in as one of the favourites, it was something we all very much hoped for. At that point, conversations were had throughout the World Cup as it became—well, it was not immediately likely that we were going to get through to those latter stages, but when that became clear, it was a conversation that happened between the ICC, Sky and the ECB to ensure that the negotiations that subsequently took place had our approval. Obviously, they did, and we were thrilled with the results and remain incredibly pleased and proud of our relationship with Sky, which has made a lot of the investment in our game possible. We are very reliant on them.

Q10 Chair: I want to know whose idea it was and when it was first floated.

Tom Harrison: When you are looking at hosting a World Cup in your backyard, you sense that there is an opportunity. I think that responsible partnerships come up with those conversations automatically. We have a hugely responsible partner in Sky, and we work very closely with them.

Q11 Chair: It seemed to be something that no one had talked about before the World Cup. It seemed to happen at the last minute.

Tom Harrison: Not at all. Not all of our conversations are made public. Ultimately, it is a sign that you do have responsible partnerships operating in terms of marketing the game of cricket in this country.

Q12 Chair: I was told that Channel 4 approached Sky about it directly and it was their idea.

Tom Harrison: I can tell you that in the lead-up to the cricket World Cup, there were conversations at senior level between the ECB and Sky contemplating activity, should the outcome be what it ultimately was.

Q13 Chair: Okay. So it was something that had been anticipated.

Tom Harrison: Whether or not other people were proactive in that conversation—I am sure they were—it is a very obvious thing, with something as exciting as a cricket World Cup, to come up with.

Ian C. Lucas: It was actually my idea.

Chair: You kept that under your hat.

Q14 Ian C. Lucas: How much money has been reinvested in the game as a result of the additional Sky broadcasting revenue since 2005?

Tom Harrison: That is a very good question. If I may, I will answer it this way: clearly, the England team environment is entirely reliant on the revenue that the ECB provides. In our first-class county network, our counties have a different level of reliance on the ECB, whether you are talking about some of the more powerful counties in respect of revenue generation through to counties that might be as much as 65% reliant on ECB revenue to pay for their annual costs. In simplified terms, you could say that the money is basically paying for first-class cricket. It is a crude way of measuring it.



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Q15 Ian C. Lucas: It may have been a good question, but you have not really answered it. What I want are some figures in terms of the amount of money that has been spent since 2005 within cricket as a result of the broadcasting revenues.

Tom Harrison: I can come up with the number. Can I write to you and give you that?

Q16 Ian C. Lucas: It has been a lot of money, hasn't it?

Tom Harrison: A massive amount of money, absolutely. What I can say, to give you a bit more flesh on the bone, is that we are moving into a scenario from 2020 to 2024 where we are around 75% reliant on pay TV for the revenue of the ECB. It is a substantial amount of reliance, and it enables us to invest to the extent that we are doing into the grassroots of the game and into the professional infrastructure.

Q17 Ian C. Lucas: The reason I am asking the question is because I have some figures about participation in cricket in recent years that concern me. Monthly cricket participation fell from 403,000 in 2011 to 279,000 in 2016, which is a huge fall over that period. Way back in 2005—I love cricket; I think it's the greatest game in the world—I had lots of discussions with people such as Charles Clarke about the fact that it was leaving free-to-air TV. I was very concerned about it. I am delighted that you are sitting where you are with those trophies on either side of you. You have presented a very sunny picture thus far, but I am really concerned about the fact that the participation figures are as they are. I think that has a lot to do with the fact that we do not have free-to-air coverage on our screens. How do you explain the fall in participation?

Tom Harrison: I think that it is a complex issue. I think it is impossible to separate the fact that in 2005 there was a transitional change in the exposure of cricket to audiences. If we take 2005 as an example, 40% of people in this country at that time had only five channels on their TV set. It was three years before the iPad was invented. It was a very different media environment from the one we are looking at now. However complex the environment is for participation since that time, cricket is in the best possible place to be able to answer some of the issues that you have raised on participation.

Q18 Ian C. Lucas: Can I put it a different way, then? What are you going to do differently now to stop the level of participation falling in the same way as it has done in the past? You have had all this extra money over that period and participation has fallen. What are you going to do differently?

Tom Harrison: First of all, we are signatories to the voluntary code, which means that 30% of our revenue will effectively be going to grassroots causes through the next five years. That is a substantial increase on the investment that has happened over the past 15 years, if you like. We have got a transformational reach profile. We are going back on to the BBC with live cricket next year. So we are capitalising on—

Q19 Ian C. Lucas: Implicit in that is answer is that you think that not having been on free-to-air TV has been disadvantageous. Do you agree with that?



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Tom Harrison: I think we are in a position now where the environment for media and the environment for making those decisions looking forward gives us the opportunity to do so now, with a product that will drive audiences—hopefully wider audiences—for cricket in this country, for the betterment of all of cricket over the next five years. We are very excited about that. Viewers will be able to watch over 100 hours of cricket on free-to-air next year.

Ian C. Lucas: I would have loved to have been able to watch cricket since 2005, but the ECB made the decision that they were not going to provide that. A lot of people who would have come to love cricket have missed out in that period. You are saying that part of your strategy—I welcome it—is to get it back on free-to-air TV. Don't do this again, please.

Colin Graves: If I may, I will try to finish off that question. At that point in time I was part of a county, so from a county perspective I know where you are coming from. As Tom says, the game has changed over those years, for a lot of reasons. I think the ECB at that time possibly missed one or two tricks. One thing we have done in the last three years is to invest in kids' cricket, from five to eight. We have launched the All Stars programme, which has got us 80,000 children playing cricket this year. If we had done that before, we could be in a different place. I believe we have started to square that circle.

Q20 **Ian C. Lucas:** I was told personally that there was going to be lots of investment in cricket clubs because of the extra revenue you were receiving from 2005. There was the Chance to Shine scheme throughout the period. I thought that was happening, anyway. I thought that was part of the reason why you had taken the extra money from Sky.

Colin Graves: It was invested to the level that the ECB received at that point in time. From next year, our revenue is virtually double. And the broadcasters are not only paying for broadcasting; they actually want to invest in participation. From that point of view, it is a different relationship with the broadcasters, going forward.

Lord Patel: One small point: I think it is common knowledge that team sports have dropped generally. One of the big issues, certainly for us, is the lack of facilities and opportunity to play cricket in schools. So one of our biggest areas for going forward is to double revenue to Chance to Shine, double the number of primary schools and come into secondary school with girls. It is important that we get cricket back into schools—that is where I learned my cricket—and work with young children.

Tom Harrison: Mr Lucas, I will try to shine a bit more light on the media profile going forward. It is clearly not just about free-to-air TV; it is also about understanding the way in which consumers are now consuming sport. It is very diverse. It is obviously across multiple social media channels. It is things like YouTube. Yes, it is highlights, and we have highlights of every night of international cricket next year going on to the BBC.



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For domestic cricket fans in this country, of whom we have a growing number—there is a thriving environment for domestic cricket—counties will be able to stream live cricket that is not broadcast on TV. These are transformational changes for people who want to see more cricket.

Q21 Ian C. Lucas: Yes, they are transformational changes, but national events are for us to come together and see them, like we did with the World Cup final. The fact that it was on free-to-air TV made it an even bigger event than it otherwise would have been. We are all enjoying the rugby World Cup at the minute, and its impact is increased by being on free-to-air TV.

On five-day test cricket, I personally would love to see at least one test—the Lords test, for example—on free-to-air TV, please. That would be a tremendous showcase for the game. I have made that argument repeatedly since 2005, and although I accept we are in a changing media environment, the evidence of the success of the World Cup final this year is plain.

Tom Harrison: In terms of the potential scenario where one test match a year is on free-to-air TV, the last time this study was done was back in 2008, which predates my involvement. However, during the Davies review, I believe, the ECB undertook an economic impact study that looked at the potential cost to the game, if you like, of a game being on free-to-air television, just in monetary terms. Basically, the estimated value was £137.4 million to list one test match a year from 2014 to 2017, around 48% of the domestic broadcast rights income. If you take that into a 2020 to 2024 scenario, that strategic premium for a pay TV operator effectively makes the strategic investment in “Inspiring Generations” extremely difficult for us to justify.

Q22 Ian C. Lucas: I think it is difficult to justify the fact that the participation figures have fallen from 403,000 to 279,000 between 2011 and 2016. I wonder how many Ben Stokes we lost in that period.

Tom Harrison: We have a much better story to tell now on participation. In our figures, we estimate that we’ve got 2.7 million people playing cricket. We’ve got 1.5 million children, and that is a growing number because of what we are doing with All Stars Cricket. We’ve got something else coming through the pipeline as well: the next stage of All Stars—eight to 11-year-olds, which is a crucial time in children’s decision-making about what sports they are going to undertake as they move into adulthood.

We will continue to look at our schools strategy as well. I will happily ask Clare to talk a little bit about this as well, because this is another area where we are very uncomfortable with the profile that we have at school. We would love Government to help us drive more participation for children through the school curriculum.

Clare Connor: What has been pleasing from our perspective has been to see year-on-year growth in women’s and girls’ participation. That is very important as we look to grow the sport and make it more inclusive, which is obviously the right thing to do for any sport but will also stand us in good commercial stead. We welcome everything that is coming out from



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Government about the school sport and activity action plan; we would like to see an hour of school sport a day for every child. As a former teacher, I think the emphasis placed on physical education should be equal to other academic education subjects, such as literacy.

Q23 Ian C. Lucas: I agree with all of that, but on women's participation, hasn't the big impact with football been because we have had live women's games on free-to-air TV?

Clare Connor: It will be a factor, without doubt.

Ian C. Lucas: It has been a massive factor. Five or 10 years ago, we did not have that, and the change that has happened is extraordinary. It is a missed—

Clare Connor: We are excited by that.

Ian C. Lucas: Yes, but we want a period where we have live—I know we are going into that now, but we missed out in the last 14 years.

Clare Connor: We are going into that now, and we have still seen growth in women's club cricket and girls playing cricket in schools every year since 2015. The number of girls within our All Stars programme is nearly 30% of the overall figure, and we believe that should be 50:50. There is no reason why five-year-old girls and five-year-old boys shouldn't be equally participating in cricket, so we will be really ambitious in that area. We will grow the number of women's and girls' club sections so that it is not a postcode lottery, and so that a woman or a girl feels her local cricket club is welcoming and inclusive for her.

Q24 Julian Knight: I am going to talk about The Hundred in a second, but I will follow up on Ian's points and talk about the state sector. When I was growing up, you played football for nine tenths of the year, and then maybe for a week you might get a game of cricket, while the private school down the road had tons of facilities and loads of pitches. As we know, the percentage of England cricketers who are from private schools far exceeds the national average. Mr Harrison, you mentioned Government help. What are you actually doing, in terms of the conversations you are having? What specific help do you need in order to get cricket into the state sector?

Tom Harrison: Thank you for your question, Mr Knight. We have seen the consultation that went out to us recently. We would like to see a push towards physical literacy being part of the national curriculum in the same way that maths and English are. That kind of emphasis on children getting an understanding of the benefits of an active lifestyle is fundamental at any age. We would like to back any move in that direction, which will help kids understand as young as possible that sport needs to be part of their daily lives. It is something that schools should take seriously.

Q25 Julian Knight: When you say "back", do you mean financially? Your earnings are going to go up—they are going to double in the next year. Are you effectively in conversation? I deal with the APPG on financial



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education in schools, and the keys are always the fact that, effectively, you have got to teach the teachers how to teach outside their core subjects.

Tom Harrison: Absolutely.

Q26 Julian Knight: What are you doing, and what do you want to see happen over the next year or two in that respect?

Clare Connor: We have identified exactly that, and the schools strategy over the next year will be working on establishing deeper and more meaningful relationships with teachers, rather than necessarily with schools themselves, because the teachers move. There will be churn in the teaching population across schools. We have established, especially around our girls' secondary schools strategy from next year, and particularly primary schools, where over 80% of the teachers are female—they are our workforce and advocates within those classroom and playground environments, and we've got to have a better relationship with them. Any support that the Government or the Department for Education can give on how we raise awareness, and on how we educate and train teachers better on all sport, would be welcome.

Q27 Julian Knight: What specifically are you offering to do? You say that the Department for Education can do this. Well, I have been trying to do it with the APPG, but it is a difficult ask. What are you going to offer to do as a sport in order to get into these schools and teach teachers what to do?

Clare Connor: We are going to be delivering a lot more teacher training on how to deliver basic, short-format, soft-ball cricket, and age and stage-appropriate formats and activities, so that children have a good first experience of the game. They can do that for a six-week block in school and then be signposted to their local All Stars club or their local club.

Q28 Julian Knight: The key in the lock is girls' cricket more than anything else, do you think?

Clare Connor: We think it is in secondary schools—Laura Cordingley may well touch on this later—because our research with Chance to Shine shows that when girls go to secondary school, they are still much more malleable and impressionable about trying a new sport. Boys at that age have pretty much decided which sports are for them—which sports they are good at—and whether they are sporty or not sporty. The research shows—Chance to Shine's research shows; we should not claim credit for it—that girls going into secondary schools are much more likely to try a new sport. We are really tackling that age group, in conjunction with club sections, so that they can play in their secondary school and then feel welcomed at a local club.

Lord Patel: You mentioned the fact that you play football for nine months of the year and then have a couple of weeks for cricket. We are now working with a lot of communities that would like to play cricket 365 days a year in an indoor facility. One of the areas that we are investing in is 1,000 non-turf pitches in the next two years. We are investing in trying to build urban cricket centres. We have identified three areas; we have



bought our first one and launched it during the World Cup at Leyton. I have just been down there to see it. It has been open for two or three months. We are getting between 400 and 450 children from all backgrounds coming in and playing. I have had a discussion with the leader of the council to ask—this is about the relationship with local government—whether we can set up an education facility and a health-screening facility in the ground, because you are getting access to children and families that you normally would not do. It is not just central Government, but local government, where we have shared the cost of that urban centre 50:50.

Q29 Julian Knight: Just on The Hundred, I have had quite a lot of correspondence on this. Looking on Twitter the other day, when the auction was ongoing, I saw that #stopthehundred was trending in the UK. It feels quite extraordinary. Are you worried, Mr Harrison and Mr Graves, about why your customer base seems to dislike the idea so much?

Tom Harrison: I would answer that by saying that The Hundred is all about growing the game of cricket in this country and protecting the things we value the most. Throughout the Cricket World Cup we have seen grounds across this country packed to the rafters with fans, 40% of whom were first-time buyers to cricket in this country. The vibrancy of the colour, the noise and the energy in those crowds is something that I think will live with all of us. The Hundred is an attempt to replicate some of that and bring it back to our country every single year, without taking anything away from our precious county environment, in which we are investing over half a billion pounds over the next five years, to ensure that we are taking every advantage we can to grow the game of cricket in this country. That is our job and we have to do that.

The Hundred is a really good way of protecting everything that we are serious about. It is about protecting test cricket, protecting four-day championship cricket and getting more kids playing cricket at school. The number of people I have had coming to me and saying, "My kids are crazy about The Hundred. They're doing their practice drafts with their mates, they're playing games with the new teams that have been developed." This is engaging at a different level with a completely new community of cricket fans in this country, and that is something we should embrace and celebrate. It is not a threat to the county game. It is a much greater threat to rest on our laurels and say, "Everything is rosy in our garden; we're going to be absolutely fine if we just keep ticking along as we are."

Q30 Julian Knight: I was reading Vic Marks's autobiography recently—it was quite a long book, actually—and in that he suggested that effectively the reason why you are going for The Hundred is that you have missed the boat on the Twenty20, having come up with this great idea. The analogy I would use is LCD, which was invented in Edinburgh but was exploited by the Japanese and Silicon Valley. In the same way, you invented Twenty20 and there was initially a big uplift of interest, and then either we rested on our laurels or the management at that time, prior to your time, ignored it or did not do what they should have done, and the IPL went massive. It is huge, with the draft and everything else. So effectively what you are



trying to do is reposition in order to make up that lost ground.

Colin Graves: I will try to answer that—I think I know where you are coming from. If you look back, a lot of people will say that yes, we missed the boat with our T20. We did not push it enough, we did not invest in it enough, and the world passed us and got ahead of us in a lot of areas. I think people would agree with that. I am like you in that I am a passionate cricket supporter and have been since I started playing when I was 10 or 13. The one thing with cricket is that it is adaptable and changeable. If you look back over the years, when I started playing it was just red-ball cricket. Then we went to the John Player league on a Sunday, which was 40-over cricket. Then we went to 50-over cricket, and then we brought in T20. Now, somewhere around the world, they are even looking at T10 cricket. The game is changing, and one reason why this game changes—I certainly believe in this—is that it adapts to the audiences we try to get involved. What we do is to give cricket to everybody, for different audiences, and that is important.

Tom Harrison: Can I add a little bit of data on the back of that? We have done an enormous amount of work through “Inspiring Generations”, landing the strategy with our network, our stakeholders and fans in this country. We undertook an enormous amount of work and we collated research from numerous different places. We have 10.5 million people in this country to a larger or lesser extent. On average, we are successful in bringing around 1.1 million of those into grounds through our county competitions at the moment. This summer, we brought 3.15 million people into grounds in this country—obviously, largely on the back of the World Cup and the Ashes, which was great, but it was also the most successful summer we have ever had for domestic cricket. We are building on very strong foundations here, but the reality is that we have an enormous pocket of fans who, for whatever reason—and we have looked at the reasons—are not embracing the cricket opportunities as they exist at the moment.

Q31 **Julian Knight:** Is part of the reason for that not just the fuddy-duddiness of the county names? Now, obviously, they are all city franchises or area franchises.

Tom Harrison: They are not franchises; they are teams. But I take your point. Let us look at the profile of an English cricket fan. This does not reflect where we have been in the World Cup, as anyone who has spent time at World Cup cricket matches or was at the Women’s World Cup final in 2017 at Lord’s on that famous day will know.

The average cricket fan is 50 years old. We have a 77% male bias and an 82% bias towards White British. We have an awfully big opportunity awaiting us—if we get this right—to create an environment for cricket that is reflective of where this country is going, in terms of its multicultural appeal and our ability to get diverse and urban communities turning up in their droves to watch the game they really enjoy and love but don’t feel a part of. That is part of what The Hundred is about.



Q32 Julian Knight: I have two further questions. We talked about healthier lifestyles earlier on. Butterkist, KP, Tyrells, Skips, Hula Hoops, McCoy's and Popchips sound like a school disco buffet, but these are the sponsors of The Hundred. How does these particular food manufacturers sponsoring The Hundred fit with the idea of young people being inspired?

Tom Harrison: No one in this room is going to challenge the fact that we have a child obesity crisis in this country, but cricket is very serious about our ambition to get young people playing cricket. We believe that we can do that in a responsible way by partnering with an organisation that can reach families and young people in a way that we cannot and we have not been successful at in the past.

Through this, we are trying to send messages about education. McKinsey has done a study assessing the trigger points and addressing some of the issues that lead to child obesity. Part of this is about education. We are basically going to be giving bits of information on every single item that is sold to kids informing them about healthy, balanced lifestyles and about the importance of having balanced diets and healthy lifestyles.

The investment that comes from this partnership will enable us to put 100 changing rooms in for women and girls around cricket clubs in this country. It will enable us to put 250 turf pitches into urban communities around the country. We have demonstrated that we have a responsible attitude towards commercial partnerships. We have done that in the past, and we are very committed to ensuring that this is a further example of how we can address a very serious issue in a positive way, through cricket.

Q33 Julian Knight: Finally, we have covered online ticket touting on this Committee. I am concerned about what could happen on that when it comes to The Hundred. How are you going to address that? What action do you need to see happen?

Tom Harrison: Thank you again, Mr Knight. We are ultimately very supportive of legislation that protects ticket buyers and, in particular, stops people making huge profits on the secondary ticket market. In 2022 we will have the Commonwealth games. It is interesting that the Commonwealth games ticketing will be protected by ticketing legislation, but The Hundred, which will immediately follow it, will not be. Anything that the Government can help us with in terms of protecting our ticket buyers would be much appreciated. We have been close in the past in this space and found that it has not managed to get to the point of what we need it to do.

Q34 Julian Knight: What do you need? Do you need a change in the law?

Tom Harrison: I think we do. We would like to have a change in the law that makes it illegal for people to sell tickets over and above face value on the secondary ticket market.

Q35 Jo Stevens: Mr Graves, my question is for you. Who invented The Hundred?



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Colin Graves: That is a good question. It was invented, if you want to call it that, or thought about and developed, by ourselves at ECB. It was our own in-house commercial team, working with various advisers and consultants, who were looking at what we could develop.

Q36 **Jo Stevens:** It is totally new. It is not played anywhere else in the world, is it?

Colin Graves: At this point in time, no, but all I can tell you is that the rest of the world is looking at it. I represent the ECB at ICC meetings, and I can tell you that at least four countries are looking at how it develops and they are certainly interested.

Lord Patel: What we did differently with The Hundred was appoint a sub-committee, which consisted of people who were not only interested in and passionate about cricket, but who had backgrounds in entertainment—they had done the opening of the Rugby World Cup and they were responsible for bands. They really understood what brings crowds to stadiums and what excites families and children. That challenge, through a background in finance, media and events, with a passion for cricket, really helped us to shape the thoughts that have gone into it.

Q37 **Jo Stevens:** Was there anybody who was a cricket fan?

Lord Patel: They were all cricket fans.

Q38 **Jo Stevens:** I appreciate that, but was there any supporters' representative in that thinking in that group?

Tom Harrison: Ms Stevens, as I said, consultation goes into the kind of thing that The Hundred is, and way beyond that into "Inspiring Generations". The Hundred is one of 26 activities that make up the strategy for cricket over the next five years. We had an enormous amount of consultation through that process with all our stakeholders, whether they were officially first-class counties, national counties or different supporters' groups, so different views were taken across the table. All of that was put together in our document for "Inspiring Generations", effectively embedding that strategy into the place.

Q39 **Jo Stevens:** I understand that, but I was interested in the bit before that—coming up with the idea.

Tom Harrison: When you say "The Hundred", are you referring to the new competition, in terms of the structure of new teams, or the format itself?

Jo Stevens: I mean the actual idea of having the format.

Tom Harrison: The way that our governance structures work internally is that we will always take those kinds of decisions through cricket committee, particularly in this case, because it is a cricketing playing condition. It is not actually a completely different format, but the playing condition is effectively changing here. We consulted a lot with the MCC. We needed their support, because we are changing the concept of overs



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within a cricket match, so it required MCC oversight with respect to the laws of the game. Then we had the support of all our stakeholders, which is critical. As Colin said at the outset, we had a number of votes through this process. To suggest that this hasn't been properly consulted is incorrect.

Jo Stevens: I am not making that suggestion.

Tom Harrison: I know, but I am wondering whether that is the thing behind it. There was huge consultation. If you draw the parallels with 2003 and beyond, in terms of consultation and planning, and the way in which this has embedded itself into our plans, it is completely different from the way it was back in 2003, for example.

Q40 **Jo Stevens:** Okay. You presumably had a budget when you started The Hundred. What was the budget and how much has it cost? How are you doing against your budgeting?

Tom Harrison: The P&L has been signed off by the county game. When we first developed a P&L for The Hundred, it was one of five different options put to the game—before the broadcast media rights process—when we were assessing how we could adapt T20 to fulfil our audience ambitions and the role that T20 needs to play for the game in this country. How could we achieve that and at the same time widen cricket's audience in this country? We had five options. The options were all broadly valued.

Q41 **Jo Stevens:** I am sorry, but you are not answering my question. What was the budget and what have you spent?

Tom Harrison: That was three years ago. The budget has obviously moved from that point as the development of the concept comes to light and you realise that there are costs. We added a women's tournament, which wasn't contemplated.

Q42 **Jo Stevens:** Mr Harrison, it's a simple question. What was the budget and how much have you spent?

Tom Harrison: The budget is in line with the game's expectations right now.

Q43 **Jo Stevens:** Which is how much?

Tom Harrison: The budget is in line with the game's expectations. I am not going to reveal the numbers.

Q44 **Jo Stevens:** You don't want to tell us how much this competition is costing?

Tom Harrison: We have a valuation, which was met in the process to broadcast budget. The tournament hasn't happened yet; it is happening next year. We are in the budget planning process, and we are planning the budget now for next year, which will go through the board—through the proper governance structures—and will be revealed after. It will effectively be confirmed in time for next year. So we haven't done budgets for any part of our business next year yet—as an approved budget.



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Q45 Jo Stevens: No, but you have obviously spent money on it so far. Have you met the budget in terms of your spend so far, or have you overspent against budget?

Tom Harrison: The budget is in line with the expectations of The Hundred board and the ECB board.

Q46 Jo Stevens: Okay; so what's wrong with T20?

Tom Harrison: Absolutely nothing. It has been a phenomenal format, which has I think played an amazing role for cricket internationally. When it was launched in 2003 in this country, I think the sense that it would grow to where it is now globally would not have been understood. That's clear. Twenty20 is a fantastic format and it is why we want our county stakeholders to have ownership of it in this country and to be able to build something which is doing incredibly well and having some phenomenal success. We have had eight consecutive years of growth. We are continuing to invest more and more every year into it, and we want that to be the case for the next eight years. We want to continue growing it; so there is nothing wrong with it at all.

Colin Graves: Can I add one thing, just to answer your question? The new tournament actually brought terrestrial television broadcasters back to the table. If we hadn't had the new tournament, and just stuck with the existing T20 competition, then I can assure you that terrestrial broadcasters would not have been back at the table in 2020.

Q47 Jo Stevens: That would suggest that there is something wrong with T20. You can't have it both ways.

Colin Graves: No, there is nothing wrong with T20 at all. I agree with Tom. We are not saying that. T20 works, for a market. We are looking at a new market as well as the existing. We believe, and we have done all the research—we have done everything that we need to do—that there is a market there for a new tournament. That's why around the world T10 is starting to happen. Why are they doing T10? Because they believe there is a market for it.

Tom Harrison: Ms Stevens, can I try and shed some light on this?

Jo Stevens: That would be helpful.

Tom Harrison: The research that we have done about these 10.5 million fans suggests that the things that prevent them from coming to cricket at the moment—from really getting involved in cricket—are the time that it takes even for T20, which can now run into, in some parts of the world, IPLs going beyond four and a quarter hours for a match. So, time. Then there is the complexity of the game—the way that it is presented can be confusing for new audiences—and the way in which the game is positioned in this country. Our whole strategy is about making cricket a game for everyone, so that every community in this country can say, "It's a game for me". For whatever reason, without tampering with T20 Vitality Blast, which is a brilliant competition and is nearly pulling in 1 million people a year now—it's astonishingly successful—there is still more work for us to



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do. The information that we get back from our partners in this—our insight partners—tells us that there is massive room for growth. The World Cup tells us that. The Women's World Cup tells us that. What we are trying to do is tap into that, and if we are successful—which we are very sure we will be—we will grow everything in the pie. There won't be a part of the game that is suffering as a result of the success of one part of the game or other.

At the same time, I have been a huge advocate at ICC for the world test championship and protecting global test cricket, and this will create a new set of fans for test cricket. Because still—it doesn't matter where you are in this country—the thing that young people still want to do is play cricket for their country.

Q48 Jo Stevens: I hope you are right. I really struggle with the idea that The Hundred is going to help T20 and 50-over cricket, and the Kia Super League. I think they will be downgraded or sacrificed on the back of this new tournament. I really hope I am wrong, but that is my concern. I wanted to ask why the women's finals day next year is going to be played on a Friday. If you are trying to attract new audiences and grow women's cricket in the way that it has done over the last couple years—it has had two really successful finals weekends at Hove—why put it on a Friday? That is going to restrict the people who can go to it.

Clare Connor: On your former point about the Kia Super League, I am excited about The Hundred, from a women's game point of view, and I think it is really important to say that. Sport has never before launched a professional competition for both genders at the same time. Our ambition is to make cricket more gender-balanced and to have men's and women's teams playing under the same team names, which we have seen work brilliantly well in the Big Bash and the Women's Big Bash. They added the Women's Big Bash after four years, and it has absolutely taken women's cricket through the roof in Australia. I am really optimistic that the women's Hundred will be a great addition to our professionalising of the women's game and will be an opportunity to show girls and women that cricket is for them as well.

In terms of scheduling, that is around broadcasters, and it will also be in school holidays. Obviously, the focus for The Hundred in the men's and women's game is that it will be played during the school holidays. We would not want to put it up against a high-profile men's game at a weekend—that would be foolish—so we believe that that Friday is the best option.

Q49 Jo Stevens: Clare, you just mentioned parity and launching The Hundred for men and women at the same time. However, it is very stark, because the highest salary for men playing in The Hundred is £125,000 and for women it is £15,000. How can we possibly justify such a huge discrepancy?

Clare Connor: That's a good question; I thought that would come next. I really believe that we have to be realistic about the journey that we are



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on. It was only five years ago that we had our first round of centrally contracted professional female players for England. That journey has been huge, in terms of pay, from where we started for those England players to where they are now. Of course, they are not paid the same as Joe Root and Eoin Morgan and their teammates, but I personally believe that we are headed in the right direction. We are all very committed to closing that gap. It does not happen overnight. I do not think you go from only having your first ever female professional players—let's say it was Charlotte Edwards—in 2014 to equal pay in 2020.

I also believe that we have a responsibility here. If we have x amount of million pounds to spend in the women's game, I personally think it would be neglectful to spend all that on salaries. We have a huge obligation to grow the game, to make clubs better, to make the school offer better and to make our talent system generally better, and I do not think that pumping millions of pounds in just so we can say that Heather Knight will be paid the same as Eoin Morgan would be right.

Q50 Jo Stevens: Are you concerned about the disparity? It is a huge gap. Even if you accept that it is not going to be the same level, it is about the depth of the gap.

Clare Connor: It is a huge gap. When you put it in the context of significantly increased England women's contracts for next year, plus their Hundred salaries, plus the fact that there will be a new professional domestic structure for them to play in, which they have never had before for 50-over and T20 cricket—we will have 60 professional female players next year, up from 20 this year—I think all of that is good evidence that we are getting some of this right and moving in the right direction, but I take the point that, on stark reading, there is a disparity. However, we will have a lot of players next year earning nearly six figures, with some players going over the six-figure threshold. Given that we did not have any professional players five years ago, I think that is a good success story, and it will hopefully attract talented girls to pick cricket.

Q51 Jo Stevens: I hope so. Mr Harrison, I think it was you who said earlier that 30% of television income will go to grassroots. On the point I just asked Clare about—the money going into the salaries for women's cricket in The Hundred—will that 30% to 70% cut be the same for women as it is for men?

Tom Harrison: I think the number you are referring to is that 30% of the ECB's income every year will be apportioned to grassroots investment, whether in programmes, facilities or other things that we are doing in the grassroots space. That is something that we are signatories to through the voluntary code. We make that submission every year, and it explains exactly how we are accounting for that 30%. That is overseen by the voluntary code.

Jo Stevens: I just wanted some clarification on that. Thank you very much.

Q52 Chair: On the revenue side of men's and women's cricket, what is the



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relative value of women's cricket as a broadcasting product, in terms of its commercial value, versus men's cricket?

Tom Harrison: It's something that we are still very much investing in. I don't think it's something that has in its own right at the moment—we are in the investment stage to enable us to eventually generate substantial commercial income from the women's game, but we are not there yet. In fairness, we have made huge strides in the two and a half or three years since we were last in the broadcast rights market. I can tell you, from a commercial partnerships perspective, that companies are very reluctant to invest unless you have a male and a female portfolio to offer.

Q53 **Chair:** I just want to get a sense of this—as a proportion, if you don't want to give the actual figures. If you were selling rights to cricket for the England men's team, versus the England women's team, what would be the ratio in terms of the commercial value?

Tom Harrison: For the women's game, it would be minute in comparison. At the moment, we are in a situation where we are developing strategies to generate more income through the women's games. That might mean different ways of packaging, which enables you to leverage some of the more, I guess, valuable, in the broadcaster's mindset, properties. But we are probably still a couple of years away from generating real value, from the women's cricket perspective.

Q54 **Chair:** Would it be 10%, 20%, 5%?

Tom Harrison: No, nothing like that. You're not even in 5% terms.

Q55 **Chair:** Okay, thank you. Colin Graves, listening to the answers on The Hundred, I suppose the question that many people are asking is, "What is the problem that The Hundred is here to solve?" It sounds like it's cricket for people who currently don't watch cricket.

Colin Graves: I think Tom touched on this earlier. Basically, we have a hard core of 1.1 million who regularly watch and attend cricket matches and we have 10 point something million who are followers and supporters, and we have to try to bridge the gap for existing people, families, children and all the rest of it. This is something different to attract them to come and watch cricket. What we have at present is not doing that. So it's to capture that "new audience", but at the same time keep the existing audience happy as well, because they will certainly migrate towards it. It's creating something new; that's how we look at it.

Q56 **Chair:** What sort of assessment has the ECB made of the impact that this may have on T20 cricket in particular? The Hundred could be a great commercial success, but that could mean that it takes audiences away from T20. A family may have only so much money that it can spend in a summer taking the children to watch cricket. What happens if they go to watch The Hundred instead of T20?

Tom Harrison: Again, the work that we have done demonstrates that there is room in the market for growth. Remember, we have various small cricket grounds around this country. We have deliberately put the Hundred



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teams in big urban conurbations, with different target markets sitting behind them, so that we are able to widen the audience for cricket. We hope, obviously, that cricket fans—county cricket fans—turn up in their droves for The Hundred. We absolutely hope and expect that. What people want is brilliant cricket being played by the world's best players, at a time when they can see it. That is what The Hundred is going to do. We will assess its success in a number of different ways, and one of those ways is that it does not in any way impact or cannibalise the great work that has been going on through Vitality Blast. That's why you still have seven home matches next year, if you're a county cricket club, to look forward to, in the same way as this year you had seven home matches.

The whole thing is designed to add people—audience—excitement to our annual diet of cricket in this country, and we will assess the value not just through bums on seats, turnstile receipts or anything like that; this is going to be about the kind of impact that we have seen through the World Cup this summer. We engaged 1 million children through the cricket World Cup this summer. There was activation through club open days, school assembly visits and loads of other things. There were players going down to their local cricket clubs—not just the England players, but local players. These are the kinds of engagements that we can roll out, using The Hundred, as a way of benefiting—

Q57 **Chair:** From what you are saying, it sounds like your expectation of The Hundred is that it will grow the audience for cricket. It won't cannibalise the existing audience; it will grow it.

Tom Harrison: Correct.

Q58 **Chair:** And you will benchmark its success in that way.

Tom Harrison: Absolutely. Mr Collins, if I could be even more specific, within four or five years cricket needs to demonstrate that it has the ability to grow. That is what the "Inspiring Generations" strategy is all about. That is why we are putting so much investment into not just strategic investments to grow the game around the country, but to make more of our core, to make the fan experience at grounds better, to play our players better. There has never been a better time to be a county cricketer or a woman player. At every level cricket has got an exciting future, but we have to demonstrate that we can grow this game. Whatever happens with media over the next five years, and there is a lot of uncertainty around that, we have got to demonstrate that wherever it goes, whether it's looking at the buyers of sport in the future or whether it is Amazon, Google, Facebook, Netflix or whoever, cricket presents its case as a sport that has the ability to grow and to engage new audiences. That is absolutely critical for the future of everything that we care about.

Q59 **Chair:** So you do not believe there is any negative financial impact for T20 cricket. Your assumptions are based on the fact that T20 revenues will stay as they are or will continue to grow as they have been growing.

Tom Harrison: That is the intention. Absolutely.



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Q60 **Chair:** Are your figures based on that assumption?

Tom Harrison: Yes.

Q61 **Chair:** Presumably the compensation that accountants are getting for The Hundred compensates them for any loss they might have incurred.

Tom Harrison: We don't position it as compensation.

Q62 **Chair:** But the issue becomes: they make as much money as they hope to make, but they will not lose out as a consequence.

Colin Graves: It should be supplementary, Chair.

Q63 **Chair:** On the access to cricket point, these new formats are taking up a lot of our questions today, but people raise concerns about the traditional County Championship game, which has become almost a pre-season and end-of-season competition. I looked at the Kent fixture list for this season just completed. There were more County Championship matches started on a Monday and a Tuesday than on any other day of the week. Monday is the most popular day to start the County Championship match. When I was a boy, county matches started in alternate weeks. A County Championship match would start on a Saturday, followed by Sunday league games, so cricket was pretty accessible. The best days of cricket would be made available to people when they had the most free time. If you have got a county match starting on a Monday, really you are aiming that at people who are not at work or at school. Could that be looked at? Within the cricket calendar, looking at the times of the year when the County Championship is played, there is often not a lot else going on. Do you think that having more county matches on days when people can go to them should be looked at?

Tom Harrison: I can assure you there is an unbelievable amount of work. Mapping the domestic county schedule against the international schedule is the most logistically heavy piece of work that we do at the ECB. We have obviously got many decades of experience of doing this and of understanding the different profiles of how things can shape up. With respect to the County Championship, we have seen that there has been massive engagement with the County Championship that does not reflect in attendance, but through digital engagement. The ECB also pays for ball-by-ball coverage for local BBC regional radio stations to cover every ball of every match. That is something that continues. In terms of attendances, I can understand your view that your memories of County Championship cricket when you could watch it are precious to you. I understand that completely.

Q64 **Chair:** It's not my nostalgia that I am praying in aid. If someone looks at the fixture list and says, "When are they playing?", it does not make much sense because normally, on the whole, sports try to organise their fixtures at times when people are available to see them play. That is a normal thing. The county cricket fixtures remind me of the horseracing schedule. You have small courses being made to run meets on odd days of the week in order to meet the broadcasting obligations, but not on days when people can go and watch them. In June this year, Kent played three



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county matches. Two of them started on a Monday and one on a Sunday. That was in June. You might think that is a reasonably peak time of the year—children are playing in school and the weather is getting better. You think, “Surely we can do a bit better than that.”

Colin Graves: I think there are two things, Chairman, to try to answer your question. First, this year was a very odd exception, as it was the World Cup year, so it was very difficult in all the schedules to fit the World Cup in around everything else we were doing in English cricket. Next year, from 2020 onwards, the schedule has been put together by the stakeholders—the counties. They got together between them; we didn’t impose anything on them. We said, “Go away and come back with a schedule that you want to have running the game of cricket,” which is what you do. The schedule for 2020 is what the counties put together themselves.

Chair: Okay, thank you. Ian Lucas, do you want to come in on county cricket in general?

Q65 **Ian C. Lucas:** Interestingly, Damian was talking about watching county cricket in his schoolboy days. I was brought up in County Durham. I am so old that it was before Durham was admitted to the County Championship. Obviously, there was an issue a few years ago concerning Durham and their relegation, and there was a parliamentary debate about that. One of the things that I was concerned about when I read about that was that there was reference to ECB regulations—in particular, the financial regulations and the deduction of points. At that time—I know that you have had governance changes, which is why I am asking this question—you said to my colleague Kevan Jones, the MP for Durham North, “We do not currently publish the ECB Regulations governing points deductions, but we are reviewing that...in light of this case.” Do you now publish the ECB regulations concerning points deductions?

Colin Graves: I don’t think we publish them to the outside world. It is in the handbook for all the counties and stakeholders, so they are fully aware of the regulations that govern professional cricket at county level. If anyone wanted to get hold of those—are they available?

Tom Harrison: I think they are on our website.

Q66 **Ian C. Lucas:** So they are now available. I am astonished that they weren’t available. I mean, they are not a state secret, are they?

Colin Graves: There’s no secret.

Q67 **Ian C. Lucas:** So why weren’t they available in 2016?

Colin Graves: To be honest, I can’t answer that question.

Q68 **Ian C. Lucas:** I think Mr Jones asked for the regulations, and they weren’t available. I quoted what I think was a letter from you, Mr Harrison: “We do not currently publish the ECB Regulations governing points deductions”. As someone who was brought up in County Durham, I am a bit fed up that The Hundred is limited to cities, in the way that you have described. If you



are talking about spreading the game, it seems a very odd thing to narrow it in that way.

Tom Harrison: It isn't being narrowed. The Hundred is being played across every county ground in the country. You won't necessarily be able to see men's games in Durham, but you will be able to see women's games. We are very clear in our ambition to take the game as far and wide as possible in this country. The whole strategy is based on giving more and more communities access to cricket wherever we can. We are passionate about that in the north-east. Obviously, Durham faced issues three years ago. The main driver for the ECB was to ensure that cricket had a long-term strategic future in the north-east of England. That was the critical driver behind our decision making. It was obviously a very difficult time for Durham and a very difficult time for the ECB, too, in getting to that point, but they are in a very good place now.

Q69 **Ian C. Lucas:** So why have you taken men's tests away from them?

Colin Graves: I can answer that one. The situation with Durham is well documented, so I don't want to go through all that. Part of the situation that helped to drive Durham into their financial predicament is that they struggled to sell test match tickets, apart from the Ashes—everybody can sell Ashes tickets. They were allocated a number of test matches in May against the second-rate teams coming over, and they struggled on an ongoing basis to sell test match tickets. That in fact pushed them further into a financial predicament, rather than helping them. Part of the agreement we ended up with with Durham was that they would not be a test match ground going forward. They would be a one-day international ground, because it is essential that we have international cricket up there, but certainly not from a test point of view.

Tom Harrison: Mr Lucas, if I may just add to that, one of things is that the UK is the global poster child for test cricket. In this country, we pride ourselves on the message we send around the world about where the health of test cricket is. It is crucial that, as we move into a situation in which we are going to have six test matches this summer, from seven, where we have been for the past few years, those six test matches need to continue to drive the message that the UK is the leading host of test cricket. We, our fans, turn up in droves to watch and celebrate test cricket. We are really proud that that is the case.

Q70 **Julian Knight:** Finally from me, we have a cricket season that is only a few months in duration. The weather is normally awful for most of it. We have 50-over games, test matches—which also mean that teams like Lancashire had to play their Twenty20 quarter-final match away from home, didn't they?—the 20-over competition, the County Championship and now The Hundred. Isn't the truth of the matter that we have too many counties, too many stakeholders? Is that the case?

Tom Harrison: Not at all. We are in a situation in which we believe that cricket in this country can grow from where we are. The environment is as healthy as it has been for cricket at any time. We are working very hard—



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Q71 Julian Knight: Sorry to cut across you, Mr Harrison, but you wouldn't actually design what you have now if you started out, would you? If you literally had a blank piece of paper and thought you would do a cricket season—I think you have just changed the make-up of the first and second divisions in the County Championship, haven't you?

Tom Harrison: Yes, 10 and eight.

Q72 Julian Knight: So you have just changed that, and you wouldn't actually design this. It is a complete hotch-potch, isn't it?

Tom Harrison: We are very lucky to have a national network of first-class counties and national counties that do an incredible job at developing players and massive interest across the country for cricket. We are very fortunate to have that. It is our privilege to ensure that that network remains as healthy as it can possibly be. We are very pleased to be able to sit here today in a situation where the two trophies you see alongside you have been delivered by that network. That is the fact. The players are created by the counties. We are sitting here with five years of financial stability ahead for all our stakeholders, and a plan to grow the game. It is a thing to celebrate, not to be concerned about.

Q73 Chair: Do think that 18 first-class professional counties is a model that will be sustainable? The counties will still be there, but do you think that the idea of county cricket as we have known it is sustainable?

Colin Graves: If I may answer that one, Chair—a good question, which a lot of people have asked over the years. I remember people asking it 20 years ago. The main thing from our point of view—we have decided this as a board—going back to the stakeholders, is that we have 41 stakeholders. Those stakeholders are treated exactly the same. The big thing when I took over was that we certainly had counties in financial situations which meant that some of them could have disappeared off the face of the cricketing world. We worked with them to make sure that they have a role to play in the English game structure. We are committed to that. As Tom said, we now have stability for the next five years, until 2024, and there is a role for all those counties to play—some big, some small, they are all different, but they are all part of the cricketing family.

Q74 Chair: Do you think that cricket should be a pyramid like football? Rather than having closed leagues, have promotion and relegation all the way up and down the pyramid.

Colin Graves: Again, a good question I have heard asked over the years. We are where we are and, again, it comes back to those 41 stakeholders, where you have 18 professional counties at the top, and then underneath you have the cricket boards and the minor counties, or I should say national counties. Whether we join those together will be a debate—is there a way to do that? Do they want to be part of the professional game, when you look at some of the financial issues that go with that? It is a debate that will be ongoing with the stakeholders.

Q75 Chair: Using rugby as an example, Exeter, which was not a big club 20 or 30 years ago, has now had huge success and can make its way up through



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the pyramid. If you want to grow cricket in different parts of the country and in different communities, one of the consequences of that could be that new teams emerge.

Colin Graves: I think that there is one big difference between cricket and, certainly, football and rugby. In cricket, the majority are members' clubs, and we do not have very rich, influential owners of professional cricket. I think that it would be a mistake to go down that road. Cricket survives, dodges, weaves and ducks because we are members' clubs and we can do that, but we have not got the massive financial clout of independent people who come in and put millions and millions into one, two, four or five counties, at the expense of the others. That is why we have got what we have got, and it works.

Q76 Giles Watling: Is the ethos of cricket, by its very nature, reserved and resistant to change? Is that one of the problems that you have to deal with in the fans and the players?

Colin Graves: You say, "resistant to change," but over the last hour, I think that we have tried to explain that we are changing cricket and that cricket is adaptable. Cricket can change; it has proved itself over the years.

Q77 Giles Watling: But are you meeting resistance?

Colin Graves: You get resistance because nobody likes change—that is fact—and nobody less so than me, as a cricket stalwart who played league cricket for 40 years up in Yorkshire, with everything that surrounds Yorkshire from a cricket point of view. I understand where they are coming from, but they cannot sit in the past and tradition and everything else. Yes, we have to respect that, but the game has to move on. Yes, people are resistant to that—people do not like change—but even an oldie like me accepts that it has to change.

Q78 Giles Watling: But you are not imposing on people; you are bringing people with you. Is that right?

Colin Graves: No, I will come back to where I started today. Everything that we have done has been in consultation with our members, our counties, our players, and everybody else. We have 80,000 members from our professional counties. Over the last two and a half years, they have been talked to by the chairman and the chief executive of those counties. Nothing has been imposed. We have talked to them and explained the rationale behind it and why we believe that it is right, from the perspective of the board and the exec. It has been put across to them, and they have had the vote at the end of the day. If they wanted to vote it down, they could have. They did not.

Q79 Giles Watling: Thank you very much. That was not a question that I meant to ask you, but it followed on from the Chair's comments. What I really wanted to talk about, because I am very excited about it, is what is happening in girls' and women's cricket—I suppose this goes to you, Clare. Sixteen years ago, my twin girls went to a school where the great



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Toppers, Don Topley, ran the cricket. The first thing that I said was, "You've got to get my girls involved." I was shocked that 16 years ago it was not even a consideration; they did not have cricket in their senior school. I come back to my earlier point: do you find that there is resistance when you try to get into schools and into the education system? Is there a resistance to girls in cricket?

Clare Connor: No, I think that we are seeing a lot more openness to it as an option. If there is resistance, it is because of time, a sense that it is complicated to coach, a sense that we maybe do not have enough facilities or kit, and a sense that it is played with a hard ball and will be dangerous. We have to change those beliefs. You can play in a small area, you do not need expert, level 3 coaches—you need real champions and real activators to make things happen—you can play with a soft ball, and it can be quick, very fun and sociable.

If we get resistance, it is about those things, but we are seeing a huge number of schools turning away from rounders to choose cricket, which is obviously very heartening for us.

Q80 Giles Watling: On a practical level, what are you doing to get into those establishments?

Clare Connor: Into schools?

Giles Watling: Yes.

Clare Connor: We are developing a whole new school strategy over the next five years that will target primary, secondary and private schools, and we will have different approaches for those. We will continue to work with Chance to Shine. We use several of our England players to do player appearances in schools to try to be role models and show girls that they can have a future in the sport and that there is a pathway for them.

A large amount of the investment we are making through "Inspiring Generations", the £20 million, will be going into secondary schools and clubs, but a huge amount will also be going into county age-group talent programmes.

Historically, as you would expect, we have not invested as much in recruiting and supporting talented girls as we have in talented boys, and we are going to be making a real step change in that area across all our counties—first-class and national counties. The visibility of a talent pathway is important for teachers; it is important that they see it and can connect to it, and understand the rationale for playing cricket in their school, and that there is somewhere for those girls to go and to be supported as talented athletes.

Q81 Giles Watling: What can we do as the Government or as parliamentarians to help you in that process?

Clare Connor: That's a good question. We have covered already a little bit of it: in state schools, it is increasing the focus on sport generally. We know the huge benefits that team sports can bring to children's mental,



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emotional and physical health; we know what cricket as a team sport can do more widely for integration, and the good societal benefits it can generate. You can provide advocacy and support on why team sport matters, and particularly why it matters for girls. We know that when girls enter their teenage years, they have a fear of playing sports. They have not generally been made to feel as welcome in sport. They have not seen a future for them in the game. That is now starting. We know that girls feel more judged if they are not deemed to be traditionally sporty, and that fear of judgment can put a lot of girls off. There is a lot to do, and we would really appreciate your working in partnership.

Q82 Giles Watling: Do you think that the disparity of pay at the top level, as referred to earlier, might not be helping?

Clare Connor: No, I think the opposite of that, because 10 years ago you could not earn a living as a woman in a team sport, and now you can. That is a huge positive, and we should all jointly celebrate it and show that our direction of travel is a really healthy one.

Q83 Giles Watling: Moving on, you have launched the new action plan for women's and girls' cricket, and that is very welcome, but it has been two years since the cup was brought home. Do you feel that you did not move quickly enough on this?

Clare Connor: I have been asked that a couple of times. You can always ask, "Why didn't you do something sooner?". A few things happened after the World Cup relating to the broadcast deal and the level of investment that we knew would be at our disposal or to our advantage, and we had a huge case-for-change piece of work to do. You talked about the change question a couple of questions ago. We had to do quite a big piece of consultative work with all our stakeholders on why there was an important case for change here. For cricket clubs, whether recreational or professional, their previous existence had been, in the main, about looking after men and boys playing the game.

Q84 Giles Watling: Did you not see in advance that winning the women's World Cup would be a big moment for you?

Clare Connor: Yes, we did, but it was not until around that time that we knew exactly what investment we would have, that we would have a strategy that was starting to take shape at that time, and that we had the buy-in from everybody across the organisation, the game and the board to make women's and girls' cricket one of six key priorities.

I do appreciate your question about whether we should have been set up a little sooner, but it takes quite a lot of organisational change to deliver what we want to deliver. We are not going to deliver it from Lord's, or from one of our other regional offices; this will be a huge local network of new people, new club development officers, new strategies with teachers and new investment into female coaches. How do we make female coaches more visible? It has taken us a lot of time to do that work. It has been a good couple of years in the making.



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Tom Harrison: The other thing is that we were coming towards the end of a strategic cycle, as we launched this new strategy in January of this year. The consultation on that strategy was immense; there were hundreds of meetings with all our stakeholders to make sure everyone was comfortable with where we were going. It is difficult to summarise how different the transform women and girls pillar is from where we have been. It is a complete transformation. Embedding that kind of mindset shift, as much as anything else—it comes along with unconscious bias training, and all the shifts in mentality, through administration, as much as through the playing ranks—is a massive piece of work. I genuinely think it would have looked very odd if it had not been launched as part of a wider strategy for the game, because it is our single biggest opportunity for growth.

Q85 Giles Watling: So going back to my original point, you feel you are winning that point? When my girls went to school, it wasn't even in consideration, but you are beginning to get there?

Tom Harrison: I think we are. I have that same challenge with two girls, who now see cricket as something they are desperate to play—and they do.

Q86 Giles Watling: Thank you for that. This new strategy is being launched in eight regional centres. Is that right?

Clare Connor: At the elite level, but every county will play a role in club development and county age-group talent pathways. The eight-region model is around our new elite domestic structure.

Q87 Giles Watling: So you will be reaching out to the grassroots as well?

Clare Connor: Oh yes. As I said earlier, half of the money is going into grassroots—into club facilities, secondary schools and club development officers to support clubs to become more sustainable. I mentioned earlier that we have seen growth in women's and girls' club cricket of 10% to 15% every year since 2015, but we have also seen churn. For every 30 sections that start up, 15 fold. We now understand the reasons for that, so we will be deploying a network of club development officers to support clubs in becoming more sustainable for women and girls. The counties and the recreational game have a huge role to play in growing the base and in local county age-group talent programmes. The eight-region model is very much around our eight senior team structure and our eight academies, from a talent perspective.

Q88 Clive Efford: Following on from that, how is grassroots development funded? What are the sources of the money? Is it just from the ECB, or do you get money from Sport England?

Tom Harrison: We have some Government funding. We have been given £1.2 million to train up 2,000 female coaches, particularly for disadvantaged communities, which we are very grateful for. The county boards sometimes get money from local councils—local government—but I do not think there is any Sport England funding now. Previously, Chance



to Shine received Sport England funding. That is not the case anymore, as far as I am aware.

Q89 Clive Efford: What is success for cricket going forward? We have these marvellous trophies here—it is wonderful to see them—but we have declining participation figures. You also have this problem in the national teams that 43% of the men's team and 35% of the women's team went to independent schools. How has that changed over the last decade?

Clare Connor: Those numbers are concerning. We acknowledge them. They have probably remained pretty consistent over the last decade. The reason that number is so high in the women's game is that lots of those young women essentially went to private schools on cricket scholarships and played with boys. Natalie Sciver is an example of that. That is exactly why we are laying out our plans as we have. We need cricket to be more accessible, and our markers of success will be around engagement with schools, clubs and participation rates. We do acknowledge it. It is where the game has been, and we have to change that.

Q90 Clive Efford: Isn't one of the problems here that the game is made more accessible in independent schools, so a higher proportion of people there play it? With the decline of free-to-air coverage of cricket, you are almost bound not to reduce that figure, because access to cricket, through either TV coverage or participation in non-independent schools, is so limited now. Isn't your strategy making this worse?

Tom Harrison: Our strategy is trying to address that point by saying, "We want to bring down the barriers." One of the key pillars of the strategy is making cricket more accessible, whether that is through access through digital, developing a new competition—which we have talked about—or the complete relaunch of our strategy for giving kids access to cricket at the earliest stage of their career. We have launched All Stars Cricket, which is the five to eight-year-olds entry-level programme. It has been very successful; it is going into its fourth year. We are about to launch the next stage of that, which is being supported by relationships with media companies that are not transactional, but strategic partnerships.

Our partnerships are very real in wanting to leave a positive legacy with the investments they make. For example, when we talk about making cricket accessible and going back on to the BBC, that is not just about linear channels and being on BBC 2 on Thursday and Saturday nights. It is about "The One Show", CBeebies, and the BBC Asian Network. It is about being on radio; it is about "Test Match Special" going into its seventh decade of partnership with English cricket. It is about the enormous digital engagement that the BBC brings us, as do all our social channels.

When we won the World Cup—the men's World Cup, I should say—it was the biggest story the BBC website had ever carried. Not just the biggest sports story; any story. The game is massive, and if the men's World Cup taught us anything, it is that the game is enormous in this country. We have an enormous amount to tap into with these accessibility strategies that will help us address the very issue you are highlighting.



Q91 Clive Efford: Can I just ask one quick question—again, about the grassroots—about co-operation with other sports? In order to get economies of scale when you are going into schools, do you co-operate with rugby, football, tennis and other sports?

Tom Harrison: Yes, we do. Actually, a live conversation is going on at the moment with the Premier League about how we engage and make it easy for teachers to teach cricket—teach activity, really, as opposed to the complexities of football or cricket. We want to partner with organisations that can help us deliver scale, and help us with this significant challenge of getting into the national curriculum, and getting into the mindset of teachers thinking that cricket is not a complicated sport to teach; it is about running around with a bat and ball.

Clare Connor: Ahead of the 2017 women's World Cup, we set up a three-way national governing body group with cricket, netball and hockey, knowing that we had the amazing privilege of three consecutive home world cups in those sports. That is something we need to do even more of. Your point is about economies of scale, best practice, and how we can learn from other sports about what makes that relationship with the teaching community work. How do we make it easier with online teaching resources to learn the basic skills that are across all sports? There were some really good learning points from that three-way national governing body group, and we should continue to build on those ways of working.

Q92 Clive Efford: When we invest in facilities, do we get it right, or do we design some sports out? I can recall that when I was involved in developing an all-weather pitch in my constituency, we partnered with hockey—who never struck a ball on the pitch after it was all done, but this was the deal we had to do—and with football. When we do that sort of thing, do we freeze out other sports? Are we thinking enough about how we bring all sports together and make sure that facilities are accessible when we spend a lot of money on them?

Tom Harrison: I think we are really good at this, actually, in school. Our facilities team is based in Manchester, and they do an unbelievable job in accessing local community heads and sources of funding. The ratio that we use is: "every £1 that we commit to facilities funding turns into £3 of funding for that particular facility." That can be match funding from local councils, and we do a lot of work with the Football Foundation, for example, and the London Marathon Charitable Trust. All these different sources of revenue are really important for cricket to leverage. We are really good at that. However, the average age of a cricket pavilion in this country is now around 52 years; we could have 10 times the amount of funding for facilities and it would not be enough for what we need to do.

Q93 Clive Efford: Talking about sources of funding, how much do you get back into the sport from gambling?

Tom Harrison: Thank you for the question, Mr Efford. It is probably the only part of the industry that does not commit any funding to cricket at all. Everyone else who has a relationship with us—whether that is fans, ticket buyers, people buying a bit of merchandise, broadcast partners or licensee



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or official partners—partners with cricket and pays for that right. I cannot say the same for the betting industry.

Q94 **Clive Efford:** It profits from what is basically your intellectual property rights—your fixtures and so on.

Tom Harrison: Yes. We estimate that the amount of money bet on cricket in the UK is around £713 million.

Q95 **Clive Efford:** That is the figure I have—the Gambling Commission figure, for 2017-18.

Tom Harrison: Yes.

Q96 **Clive Efford:** Do you have any dialogue with the Government, saying to them that the gambling industry is acting unreasonably and will not invest anything into grassroots sport, and asking them to place a levy on the industry? Have you ever had those discussions?

Tom Harrison: We mentioned it softly to a Sports Minister a few years ago and it is something that was raised in the Sports Business Council that existed briefly. I would support anything that we could do to enable us to put that message through.

We put massive steps in place to ensure that betting on cricket does not impact us from an integrity perspective; we spend an unbelievable amount of time thinking about that. Our fans have to believe what they see is real. If you don't have that, you do not have a sport. We spend an awful lot of money on our anti-corruption and integrity departments. Beyond that, in my opinion, the businesses that profit from cricket should be investing in the development of the very thing that they profit from, which is the development of players, the grassroots and all of that.

Q97 **Clive Efford:** Have you any idea of a figure for how they profited from the World Cup?

Tom Harrison: No, I would not have that figure, because we do not have the direct relationships with the industry that would enable us to get access to that figure.

Q98 **Clive Efford:** Can I move on to your finances? You have had a dramatic drop in your reserves over the last three years. According to the figures we have seen, you have an operating deficit of £23 million. Yet you have these plans to commit £450 million of direct funding to the network of county cricket clubs over a five-year period, which includes improvements in club facilities and infrastructure and constitutes a 60% increase on current direct funding levels. How is all that going to add up?

Tom Harrison: It is a strategy. It is designed to create sustainability in the network and to build robust businesses for our counties, as much as anything else.

In terms of the reserve levels—Colin will go into it in a second—our revenues are looked at in four-year cycles. What has been really different about the last four years compared with the previous four years and the

four years previous to that is the change in the value being extracted from the Indian market in respect of broadcast rights.

Until 2014-15, the value of Test cricket in the Indian market was very different to what it is now. That is what you are seeing coming to light there—the impact of IPL and a very discerning T20 audience in India. That has had an impact on the way in which that audience regards Test cricket globally. Every single board has seen that decline in Indian broadcast revenue. That is one of the reasons why our reserves are down. Colin will go into the principal reason.

Colin Graves: As Tom said, our reserves have always gone on a four-year cycle—you get money at the start of a cycle and then it drifts down over the period through the expenditure and everything that we need to do. It was always planned that our reserves would drop over that four-year cycle. Going forward next year for the new five-year cycle, which has been done through our audit committee, chairman of audit and FD, our reserves will build up to somewhere in the region of £65 million. That is with the new income coming in from the new broadcasting deal.

Q99 **Clive Efford:** Do you anticipate the current deficit being turned around, and is that as a consequence of The Hundred?

Colin Graves: It is a combination of everything. It is the total new broadcasting deal, including The Hundred, the internationals and everything.

Q100 **Clive Efford:** And you expect that the income will be sufficient not only to create that turnaround but to cover the levels of expenditure that you are planning. Are you confident about that?

Colin Graves: Yes.

Q101 **Clive Efford:** Can I move on to the new governance arrangements that you brought in in 2017? Do you think that they give a voice to the entire cricket community? Do you think counties and others have a voice through that?

Lord Patel: It is important to recognise how much work has been done over the last two to three years. We had three external reviews and, as Colin mentioned earlier, a long internal review that resulted in around 72 recommendations, 70% of which have been implemented. The other 30% will be implemented in this next year. Besides having a governance structure that surpasses the Sport England code of practice, as I mentioned earlier, we consistently engage with our first-class county chairmen and our national counties, and we have also now established a professional game group, in which the first-class counties will regularly discuss with us issues that arise with them. There is a constant engagement and consultation process. But, at the board level, hopefully we are extremely transparent. We are focused on “Inspiring Generations”. We are financially astute, ensuring that the figures Colin mentioned earlier are met, and we have very clear, honest and transparent rules,

procedures and systems that have developed very clearly in the last two years.

Q102 Clive Efford: If the counties and other parts of the sport were sitting here, would they agree with that?

Lord Patel: They actually voted for it. We had a vote, at the end of the day, on the structure of the new board, and that was voted on by the counties. As Colin said, we could not alter anything that the counties did not agree to.

Colin Graves: If I can clarify, Mr Efford, the question you have asked. Having sat on the other side of the fence as a county chairman for a number of years, I can assure you that over the last three years there has been more communication, more consultation and more discussion with the county chairmen and the chief exec than ever before in the history of the ECB. That is a fact.

Q103 Clive Efford: As part of the new management structure, you introduced four non-executive directors who do not have anything to do with cricket—they have no history or past with cricket. What was the purpose of that? What were you seeking to achieve when you did it?

Lord Patel: It's the diversity of skills on the board. We have phenomenal talent in terms of media, finance, diversity and inclusion, and commercial activity acumen. I am one of those people who do not have a connection with cricket, but I love it with a passion and have played since I could walk. There is that element of it, but I bring something else to the board besides a cricket history.

Q104 Clive Efford: The Good Governance Institute has called for you to introduce a board code of conduct alongside a programme of board professional development.

Lord Patel: That's been completed. We have a board induction for every new non-exec director who comes. We have a directors' handbook. We have ongoing reviews and appraisals, and we are hoping we will take something akin to that out to the counties and help them develop their code of conduct as well.

Q105 Clive Efford: Thank you for that. Can I just ask one quick question on secondary ticketing? It is a particular bugbear of mine. How much do you think that secondary ticketing costs the sport?

Tom Harrison: I do not have those numbers, Mr Efford. It would be a massive amount.

Colin Graves: Substantial.

Tom Harrison: Out of fans' pockets.

Q106 Clive Efford: You answered a question earlier about what rules or regulations could be brought in, to restrict it further, but is there any more that you can do to protect the fans? I have just been through this with my family, who have been buying tickets for Glastonbury. You have to



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register; you can't just rock up and be a botnet. You have got to have a photograph. You have to register before you can even bid for the tickets; and then when you turn up your photograph is on your ticket. Is there more that can be done, even within the regulations now, to minimise—I do not think you will ever stop it completely—this secondary ticketing market that is absolutely ripping off fans?

Tom Harrison: I am sure there is more we can do, Mr Efford. We work very closely with our first-class counties on all matters of ticketing. We do not sell the vast majority of tickets to fans directly. The ECB does not necessarily get involved in that process. Actually, ironically, we do when it is an ICC-owned tournament, but we don't for England or, obviously, county events. In The Hundred we have an arrangement with counties where that will be a relationship that is closer than it has ever been, so the opportunity for developing a better way of ensuring that fans are protected is there for us now. So we will certainly take steps to ensure that we do as much as we can to protect fans. It is a big problem for us.

Q107 **Clive Efford:** I have heard that for years—"We'll do our best"—and it still goes on. Are there any concrete proposals to make any changes to how you sell tickets that would protect fans from this?

Tom Harrison: It is not something that has come to our board, and it is not something that we have discussed in detail, but I will take it from this meeting and definitely raise it with counties, and write to you with steps that we are prepared to take to protect fans.

Q108 **Chair:** Just a couple of final questions from me, for this panel. I just want to be clear. With The Hundred, was the decision on where the teams would be based taken by the ECB? Was there a bidding process? Could people put in offers to demonstrate how they could meet the criteria for being a host city, if you like?

Tom Harrison: Yes, absolutely. There was a full process of bidding, for, effectively, the rights to host a team and for those, effectively, licences to be made available for a period of time, which is five years. That process was dealt with through an independent panel that looked at the submissions, and then we took it through the Hundred board, which is an official sub-committee of the board, and then to the ECB board for a final decision.

Q109 **Chair:** Would those criteria, though, have made it practically impossible for any venue that was not one of the test venue grounds, either current or previous, to bid?

Tom Harrison: No, anyone was welcome to bid, absolutely. Anybody at all could bid. I think we were very clear about the criteria that we wanted to introduce, which was the concept of developing a wider audience, which would have definitely meant that if you were in a large conurbation around the country it would have been an advantage. That was not to say that it was impossible for other grounds to be successful, but it was designed specifically to engage with new communities around the country, and to



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enable us to get the kind of impact that we have had through the Cricket World Cup on a more regular basis.

Q110 Chair: But did the criteria include experience of hosting major cricket matches? You might have cities that have sports venues that could be adapted to host cricket, but have not done it before.

Tom Harrison: Yes, I think all of our grounds are pretty experienced in hosting big—

Q111 Chair: That was not the question I asked. It was just, if a bidder had come forward and said, “Well, we meet all the criteria. This isn’t a test ground, but we can actually create a venue of the size and quality required”—

Tom Harrison: As in build a completely new venue, for example?

Q112 Chair: Yes, or extend or adapt an existing cricket facility to make it a larger one to deal with a bigger audience. Were options like that considered possible, or was it largely—

Tom Harrison: Yes, although I think what we were trying not to do through this process was impose huge costs on a ground’s ability to get itself into the kind of shape for hosting men’s 100-ball games. I will just say that every ground will be hosting Hundred events. I think you are referring to the men’s events. It was a process that was pretty clear about what we were trying to achieve. I do not think it was in any way counting against counties—discriminating against counties. I really don’t think that was the case.

Q113 Chair: I suppose I was interested in the realistic possibilities of a range of different bids coming in that could be seriously considered. Or was this always going to be a format that rested largely on the cities that are used to hosting big cricket matches and have test grounds to host them?

Tom Harrison: The drivers behind why we wanted to develop a new competition were about developing a tournament that could get into these 10.5 million fans and having a sense of where those fans were. We had a sense through demographic profiling, and we did a lot of catchment area research to understand how far fans travel when they buy tickets and which nights of the week they are prepared to travel or not. That kind of detailed information went into the submissions to enable us to make the right decisions about where these teams should be based. Clearly, availability of transport to grounds is an important part of this. That obviously puts the larger cities in the country in an advantageous position.

Q114 Chair: What is your view on the travel time?

Tom Harrison: It changes dramatically based on night of the week, opposition and distance from grounds. A fan in and around Leeds might be prepared to travel further to watch a Roses match than they would a game against another rival, because of that local derby environment. That is the kind of detailed information that we looked at and we look at regularly.

Q115 Chair: Sorry, I was not clear. You said that those are criteria. I was



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interested in how those criteria apply. Do you say, "For a match like this, we don't think people will travel more than an hour or two"?

Tom Harrison: I will have to get back to you on the exact level that we thought, but if you are travelling over an hour to a game, where the entire game lasts two and a half hours—I will come back to you on the exact detail behind that.

Q116 **Chair:** There was a time, years ago, when people talked about whether the Olympic stadium could be used to host cricket games, for example, in the summer period. That is not a cricket venue, but it could be adapted. There are other urban grounds.

Colin Graves: We looked at using the Olympic stadium for the World Cup. There were so many issues involved in changing it into a cricket ground and the cost of doing so started at £1 million-plus. There was a lot of negativity. We looked at it, because we saw it as an opportunity, but from a practical point of view, it just did not stack up.

Chair: Okay, but you are saying that you are prepared to think laterally about where these games could be held.

Colin Graves: We will look at it, and that is what we did.

Q117 **Chair:** Do you see The Hundred as fixed, in that the teams created and the venues they play at will be consistent, or could they move around in the future, if new opportunities came along?

Tom Harrison: The strong view of the ECB is that this is the start of The Hundred. Hopefully, on the back of a successful tournament, building on the success of county cricket, and the continued success of the Vitality Blast and other short-form cricket in the country, we will be able to expand it. That would be a significant sign of its success. It is highly possible that that will be the case in the future.

Chair: Expand it in terms of having more teams.

Tom Harrison: Absolutely.

Q118 **Chair:** But you do not see the teams that are being created moving, necessarily, from where they are based. Do you see them as building a base where they are, or do you think, like an American football team, they might suddenly decide to move to another part of the country?

Tom Harrison: That remains to be discussed.

Colin Graves: I do not see that. You are building eight teams in eight regions. The opportunity could be—it will always be under review—whether to have two more teams in different regions. That will be the discussion that will happen, as and when appropriate.

Chair: So you think that over time these new teams would start to build a relationship with the communities they largely serve and will be a fixture.

Colin Graves: Yes.



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Q119 Chair: There is one final question I thought we should ask Colin Graves, because it is something that has been reported quite a lot during your time as chairman. You mentioned earlier that you were previously chairman of Yorkshire. Several people have reported your family trust connection, the ongoing connection with Yorkshire and your role as chair of the ECB. Could you state for the record of the Committee how you sought to manage what could be perceived as a conflict of interest and how the board has helped you with that?

Colin Graves: Yes, certainly. From my point of view, my family trust has a financial loan arrangement with Yorkshire County Cricket Club. That is managed by a set of professional trustees. I have nothing to do with that whatsoever—not one bit. I declared that before I even took up chairmanship of the ECB. I have no financial involvement personally with Yorkshire County Cricket Club. With any conflict that has appeared to have arisen at any time, I have always excused myself from those discussions. Kamlesh has chaired the board when it comes to match allocations and all those kinds of things. I have ensured that I am well out of any situation where people could say I had a conflict of interest.

Q120 Chair: Lord Patel, any decision that the board has taken that might have had a financial impact on Yorkshire cricket has been a decision that has been taken without Mr Graves's participation.

Lord Patel: Absolutely. In terms of the information we have, the chairman does not actually need to exclude himself, but he has done every time.

Q121 Chair: It is one of those dilemmas, thinking of future chairs of the ECB. Having someone who has been a chair of a county might be seen as a good thing in terms of experience, but it will nevertheless always bring some allegation that that person has an inherent interest in the county that they used to serve. Do you feel that the ECB has a good structure in place with the new board to ensure that, whatever the background of the new chair, any similar issue can be managed successfully?

Lord Patel: I think it will be. We have a nominations committee, and we have a good process. We have a transparent process for recruiting from the wider world. Of course you want people with cricket knowledge as well as the business acumen to run a very complex organisation, as Colin has described. We have the governance structures in place to cope with someone with previous county experience.

Q122 Chair: Finally, just to go back to something I touched on at the beginning, do you think the ECB might develop a role, similar to what football has done, where a representative from the professional first-class game and a representative who represents minor leagues and community cricket are fixtures on the board? I think it looks a bit odd that none of the first-class counties have a direct voice on the board.

Colin Graves: I will start off on that, and then I am sure Kamlesh has his view. Having sat on both sides of the fence, both as chairman of a county and being where we are now, I believe that the input, whether you are a



county board or from a professional county cricket club, is better than it ever has been. That connection is better than ever. If anyone says that it is not, then, honestly, I would disagree with that. I have been part of how we communicate, how we liaise and the meetings we have. It is fantastic, and a lot of people have said that to me within the game.

Chair: Thank you. I think that concludes the questions from the Committee to this panel. Thank you for joining us and for bringing the World Cups. Congratulations on behalf of the Committee for the success of the England team this summer.

Colin Graves: Thank you very much for inviting us.

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Laura Cordingley, Andy Nash, Chris Willetts and Becky Fairlie-Clarke.

Q123 **Chair:** Good afternoon. Thank you for joining us for the second panel. During the first panel session, a couple of people—the gentleman behind you is one of them—were wearing T-shirts with slogans on that related to the evidence session, and they were asked to cover those slogans. That is, unfortunately, the rule of Parliament. It covers all parliamentary proceedings, and it includes Members. No one can have a T-shirt with a slogan—or hold a banner or have a sticker on—that is advocating something. It is a general rule that is applied. I hope it will not be seen as a discourtesy to people in the room; it is just a general rule that has to be applied at all hearings. I wanted to state that for the record.

Thank you for joining us. We covered a very wide range of issues in the first session—I think you were all in the room for at least part of it—and I am sure we will cover a similar range of topics now. I wanted to start off by looking at grassroots cricket, which is something that we touched on. The Committee did an inquiry, which we published earlier this year, about the social impact of sport.

Last summer, we went to Kennington Park, which is close to the Oval, where there is a community cricket pitch—it is probably the nearest cricket pitch to the Oval. It was a baking-hot summer's day, and we were talking about football. I think the cricket pitch was largely being used by different football groups to play football on, and the all-weather wicket in the middle was not being used at all. I thought, "Is there a generation being lost to cricket?" Even facilities that were put in urban areas in the recent past are not being used for the purpose they were designed for, and people are engaging in other sports. I am interested in hearing, particularly from Laura and Chris, whether you have views about how we engage urban communities in cricket where, at the moment, there is not as much cricket as we would like to see.

Laura Cordingley: Thank you very much for having me. I am Laura Cordingley, chief executive at Chance to Shine. We are a national children's charity, and we use cricket to help change lives. We work with around half a million children a year. I am proud to say that there is an

almost equal split between boys and girls. We work in state schools and in disadvantaged communities.

To answer your question around urban cricket and, I guess, cricket outside of rural areas, our Street programme was developed back in 2008 very much to address that gap. We recognised as a charity that many young people were taking part in cricket in schools but did not have the opportunity to go to a traditional cricket club. There wasn't a welcoming space for them, and there wasn't a safe space for them to be able to take part in cricket, so Street was born out of that. Fast-forward to today, and we have 200 projects around the country. They are funded through Sport England, as one of our partners through that programme, and, obviously, as an independent charity, we fundraise to help deliver against that.

In terms of participation, the areas are in the top 30% of disadvantaged areas in the community, and 87% of the participants are from a BAME background. In terms of the demographics of that, furthermore, that same percentage of young people do not take part in any physical activity outside of those cricket sessions, so they are self-identifying as being completely inactive outside of a school setting. We work really hard to try to make sure that as many young people as possible get the opportunity to take part in cricket outside of school and in community settings. Through that programme alone, we have around 5,500 young people who take part in cricket on a regular basis.

It is a year-round programme. We have photos of children playing cricket in the snow in Newcastle, through to kids playing on all-weather pitches in Portsmouth. It is free, and that is really important for us. We know that 90% of the kids tell us that the fact that it is free is hugely important. The age ranges are eight to 16 for our Street young programme, and our young adults programme is 16 to 24. Our young adults programme came about because when children got to 16—originally, Street took them up to 16—they saw Street as their club. They go there and, on average, attend around 30 sessions a year—30 hours a year throughout the year. They wanted to continue participating. As they get older, more competition comes into it, so they take part more regularly against other Street teams in other Street venues. We have seen that change the face of cricket in a lot of urban areas. There are a lot of disadvantaged coastal towns that we work in as well. Portsmouth is one, and some of the others are coastal areas of disadvantage. For us, that is hugely important.

In terms of wider grassroots participation, outside of the work that we do with schools, a huge amount is around helping children to progress. For us, progress covers them as an individual and how they develop through the sport—we have a lot of evidence that shows them developing their personal, social and physical wellbeing—and also how they progress in the community through All Stars and into traditional clubs as well.

Q124 Chair: How do you develop a pathway into cricket for people who may engage in cricket through Chance to Shine? Going back to the Kennington Park example that I used, if you live on the Brandon Estate, what is your pathway to playing for Surrey if you are not at a school that plays a lot of

cricket?

Laura Cordingley: In terms of our state school programme, we are in one in four primary schools. That is not an insignificant number. It helps us reach around half a million children a year. Clearly, we would like to do more. It is completely scaleable, as is our Street programme. We send coaches into schools. It goes back to the point that Clare made earlier. Teachers have a real lack of confidence in terms of delivering cricket, but the approach that we take around how to help them develop the whole child through the sport really helps. We then work with the counties, local clubs and associations to help children progress on to club cricket either through All Stars or Street.

To give you an example, not far from Surrey, we have the Black Prince Trust site, where we have our Street programmes. To give you a real-life example of how that actually happens, we have a girls' project that is based in Lambeth, and the teachers physically walk the girls to that project. There is no one-size-fits-all in terms of what works for young people. We work with local organisations and local partners to help us work out exactly what is the best way to help young people on their pathway. If you take Street as an example, out of those children that take part in Street, 315 went on to traditional clubs. As I said, many of those young people see Street as their club, but if they want to progress and they want to go on to traditional clubs, the counties that we work with work very hard to help them do that.

We are not here about talent. We are here about the difference that we can make to young people, but it is a really nice by-product when we have those examples. We have a handful of examples of where young people have gone on to representative county cricket. Middlesex springs to mind. We had a girl called Elsa that did really well and went through. Sunny Singh ended up playing for Warwickshire. He started off at a Chance to Shine Street session, so it happens. Is it perfect? Absolutely not. Can we do more? Certainly. That is why we are here as a charity.

Q125 Chair: Finally, before we move on to Chris, do you have a sense of what you might call cricket notspots in rural areas, too? There have been concerns about the closure of village cricket clubs for a variety of reasons. My village in Kent, Elham, has a very strong cricket club that regularly produces players that play for the county. The other local club, Sibton Park, was in the final of the national village competition recently. I can also think of other areas where cricket is not played very much anymore. Does Chance to Shine look at rural communities as part of this programme as well?

Laura Cordingley: Absolutely. You could pretty much drop a pin on a map. I am more than happy to share the map that we have with the Committee afterwards. We support 4,500 schools across the country. We are in absolutely every single county, and we work really hard to make sure that our footprint is spread. The reason that Street exists is because there was a lack of clubs where those clubs are. I am from a Durham mining village, and I know the power of village cricket in terms of what I

can do. Quite often, they are the only facilities in those communities that kids can go back to. If you are a kid and you are bussed to and from your school, and you go back to your village, the village cricket club is a community for you, so we work hard with counties to make sure that, where there are club facilities, children can access them. All Stars has been very good at helping us with that.

What we have now for kids in primary schools is tennis ball, softball, plastic bat. When they go to the club now, they have a similar experience in terms of All Stars. It's a really welcoming environment, and we have had some really good feedback from that. Fundamentally, through Chance to Shine, 60% of children say that they really like the sport and want to continue playing it. If they have not actually picked up a bat and ball, one in 100 say that they like the game, which is a huge discrepancy. We know that you actually have to put a bat and ball in their hands first. You have to help them to develop through it, but they have to have fun first and foremost.

Q126 Chair: Chris, we welcome your insights on this, particularly on cricket in urban contexts and your experience with Platform Cricket.

Chris Willetts: What we do is very similar to that, but obviously in a tighter area, and perhaps a bit more forensically, almost. We have been working on our particular project, Platform Cricket, across three London boroughs. We do similar things—we work in schools—but we really focus on the transition of moving children outside of school.

There are really two issues that we are trying to address. One is bringing more kids from disadvantaged backgrounds into cricket, and one is bringing more kids from BME backgrounds into cricket. Of course, there is a supply and demand issue there. For a lot of inner London boroughs, across the boroughs that we work in, there are only three clubs with youth sections. We worked out that, across inner London, it is something like 0.06% of the primary school-aged population that could actually move into a cricket club youth section now, if they wanted to, so there is a big supply issue.

By working in a tighter geographical area, you can get to know the specifics of the community that you are trying to work with, because there are often quite subtle barriers that stop that from occurring. Quite often, they are cultural. Our work in Tower Hamlets, for example, is about setting up stuff around religious practices when kids are going to mosque or Arabic reading—knowing some of that intelligence. In south London, it is a bit different. It is about being able to work alongside other sports, because at the moment, cricket is probably not the first sport that they go to.

One of the key things is being able to work at the right age. For quite a long time, investment in sport has come too old to meaningfully get kids involved in sport. It looks good as an intervention and a diversionary activity for kids that might be getting into other, more social issues, whether that be gangs or radicalisation, or even as an intervention for



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health issues, with measures that are taken at 11 years old for childhood obesity. To show an impact on that, it is almost too late.

A lot of kids who get support from home to access cricket are doing so at a much younger age. What we are doing is working with kids at that kind of age, when they are eight or nine, so there is some parity or equity for kids who are from areas that do not have cricket clubs in them, compared with kids who do have cricket clubs in their communities or who have support from home to be able to access cricket, even if it is not on their doorstep.

Q127 Chair: You said that supply was one of the barriers to entry. Is that a lack of community cricket facilities and clubs?

Chris Willetts: I think the facilities can be a red herring sometimes. Clubs definitely, but the important thing that comes with clubs is the volunteer workforce. If you look at volunteering, and the fact that people who are degree-educated or in professional jobs are much more likely to volunteer, that is where the postcode lottery comes into it. What you need to do, in more deprived areas, is start that off artificially with the professional workforce. Then, when the kids start playing, obviously their parents and other family members or community members, who might not necessarily be cricket enthusiasts but are community champions, will gravitate towards it. They come into the equation, and then there is an opportunity to get them involved in coach education and grow it from there.

Q128 Chair: Do you think role models play an important part? In some ways that touches on some of our earlier questions about cricket on television. Lots of children seek to emulate sports stars and what they have achieved. Do you think that is the same with cricket?

Chris Willetts: I do. First, there is no doubt that it resonates more with kids from a particular background if there is a player from that background. The subtle thing that comes into it as well is this idea of using cricket for other social outcomes, and the integration and citizenship angle. What you get quite often in immigrant families, particularly first-generation immigrant families, is a tendency to watch home-language channels, so Bangladeshi or Pakistani cricket—wherever it might be—is the cricket that is watched. So probably the other thing that adds a little power to the “free to air” thing is that idea of getting kids from immigrant families watching England playing and becoming England supporters.

Q129 Chair: Given where you work, in London, is it important to have centres such as Beckenham, where people can watch first-class cricket, England junior matches, on their doorstep, rather than it being a trip to one of the big test matches? It is less of an issue in other cities around the country, because the big cricket grounds are pretty accessible for the people living in those cities. London is slightly different. Does that help?

Chris Willetts: It does. I definitely think that there are counties where their centre is out—Kent, for example. They come into an urban area but their centre is traditionally outside that area. They are disadvantaged in terms of being able to access that population. If you look at it purely in terms of population numbers, a smaller county such as Northamptonshire,



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for example, is eclipsed by two London boroughs. So centres such as Beckenham, which enables Kent to access that population better, are potentially very important. I don't think they are yet realising that potential, but it is a relatively new facility.

Q130 Chair: Clearly, you are working to give more children the chance to play cricket. Do you think that there should be more opportunities for children to watch cricket live, particularly children from deprived communities or where those opportunities might not exist?

Chris Willetts: I think it helps, but I certainly don't think it overtakes the need to invest in infrastructure. The first and foremost thing is being able to invest—first, I mean people. In our programme, the community part of participation is based in local parks. It is easy to start then. If you think about some of the countries that England competes with, facilities at the grassroots level are very basic. We can cope on that front. What the viewing does, whether on the TV or in person, once someone starts it, it push them further along on that journey—it is about aspiration and continuing in both age and talent. But the very first thing is investing in infrastructure, and the inner cities need that on a much more local level than when you get to the suburbs and outwards.

Laura Cordingley: I would echo that in terms of the “free to air” debate. Clearly, more exposure for children is excellent, but when one in five children are only as physically active as they need to be, we concentrate on getting children physically active, on getting them to pick up a bat and ball and making sure they get access to sport and cricket, and that they can develop through it.

The question about role models was really interesting, because we survey about 2,000 to 3,000 children a year through Chance to Shine. We asked who their favourite cricketer was. We expected them to say, “Joe Root” or “Heather Knight”, but the answer we got, from the majority of the children, was “my Chance to Shine coach”. First, that is not a surprise, because that coach is their first role model, showing them a love for the game. For us, that was so encouraging—that is their entry point into the game.

We are delighted, in terms of the ECB's “Inspiring Generations” strategy, that they want to double the number of young people who access state school cricket. As their delivery partner for that, they will be significantly increasing their investment in us at Chance to Shine, to help us do that. For us, that is really powerful, helps us get more kids to be active and helps them to benefit through the sport.

Chris Willetts: I think your analogy about playing in the parks really hits that home. This is broad stroke, but in south London you have a large Afro-Caribbean population. For a variety of different reasons, it has become a much more African population—generally not cricket-playing traditionally, compared with West Indian countries. It kind of hits home that you need people on the ground to do that, particularly in the areas of Lewisham and Greenwich that we work in, with the Nepali, Sri Lankan,



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eastern European and South American communities. They are not places that have a cricket tradition, so you are starting from scratch.

You need people on the ground from start to finish, really, giving the first experience and then helping push people through that pathway for the first time. We see parents all the time—Croatian, Polish, Italian—who are going to cricket for the first time with their kids. The human workforce and infrastructure around that is very important.

Q131 Chair: We heard a lot in the earlier session about how The Hundred is seen as an opportunity to engage people in communities that are not traditional cricket communities. Has the ECB had any conversations with your organisations about how The Hundred as a brand can be used as part of your work?

Laura Cordingley: Yes, we have. The ECB is very good at consulting with Chance to Shine, and I would like to think that they are pretty proactive at coming to us. In terms of The Hundred, if it engages more children, that is a really good thing for us. The kinds of conversations we are having with the ECB so far, to give you an example, are about our Street projects and, in the run-up to the tournament next year, what we might be able to do to effectively help children play the format of the game that they may see. Conversations are fairly unadvanced at the moment, but they absolutely have spoken to us about it.

Q132 Chair: Chris, have you had any conversations about that?

Chris Willetts: No, but we are a relatively small fry in the piece, so I would not expect it.

Chair: Ian, did you have a question on this?

Q133 Ian C. Lucas: Yes. It was about the participation figures that I quoted earlier—I think you were all present—which really worry me. I have been hearing about Chance to Shine for well over 10 years, and I have seen it relatively locally in my north-east Wales constituency as well. If all this good work is going on, then why are the figures so disappointing?

Laura Cordingley: From a Chance to Shine perspective, I can tell you the number of children we have physically supported through the years. At the moment we support, on average, half a million children in state schools to take part in cricket. Of those, around 40,000 then go on to community cricket. I am not saying that figure is perfect, but those kids probably would not have done that if our programme did not exist.

We can always do more, and one of the conversations we are having with the ECB is about how we take what we know—we have some really good examples. To give you an example, Northumberland supported 8,000 children through Chance to Shine this year, 1,000 of whom went to a club or All Stars as a result of that programme. They are clearly doing something brilliant in the north-east, and we are investing in some research to look at the good examples that we have around the country and how we can improve on that.



The other point, from our perspective as a charity, is that a lot of those children may never go on to a cricket club, but they do tell us that they have a better affinity with their sport. Their attitudes towards sport, and how they have developed through the work that we do, have really helped them. Some 80% of the children who take part in Chance to Shine have improved their confidence, and over 60% of them say that they have a healthier attitude towards sport as a result of taking part in the programme. If they go on to another sport, from our perspective, that is not a bad thing. We have helped them to develop a really positive attitude.

There obviously is the other point that, in general, participation has been declining across all sports. That is not to make an excuse for cricket, but it is something we need to be mindful of.

Q134 Ian C. Lucas: I am conscious of the other panel members. Do you think there has been a problem with schools over the past 10 or 15 years? Do you think school involvement has declined?

Chris Willetts: Laura has hit the nail on the head, really. What you are referring to, the participation, has not often been the most important measure. Of course, I am talking from quite a narrow geographical angle, but with some of the Chance to Shine activity, the school outcome has been the outcome in itself—you know, “How many kids are doing school sessions?” There is then an assumption that if they have had a good experience at school, a certain percentage will move on, and there are so many other distractions. This is possibly more of an urban issue, but kids have very busy lives and have a lot of other distractions, some of which are much easier to—

Ian C. Lucas: Until they grow up.

Chris Willetts: Yes. I also think that sometimes the age that has been focused on is wrong. There is this idea of doing it at a young age, rather than some of the interventions that we have had through Sport England money, which—I am talking about outside of cricket, as well—have generally been 14 and 16-focused. That is just a little bit too late.

Q135 Giles Watling: I get the impression that the introduction of The Hundred format is generally a popular thing.

Andy Nash: I haven’t spoken yet. *[Laughter.]*

Giles Watling: I am delighted that you have chosen this moment to open up. I just wonder whether we have had any evidence from children and fans that perhaps the existing forms of cricket are far too complicated and difficult to understand. Possibly there are people from different areas who don’t understand cricket—because they come from different countries. Perhaps this might be a very popular diversion—the introduction of the new Hundred format. Andy, go on; you haven’t spoken yet.

Andy Nash: I come from a background in the professional game—I was in administration at Somerset for 14 years. I was in an honorary position,



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which is a posh way of saying that it wasn't paid. I also was elected to serve two terms on the main board of the ECB. So that is the lens through which I have observed cricket.

I buy into the school of thought that says The Hundred is—well, Wisden is not renowned for intemperate language, but Wisden describes it as an “almighty punt”. Others have described it as a “reckless gamble”, and that is what I think it is. It has the potential to split the game and bankrupt a lot of the game. I am very happy to expand on that.

Q136 Giles Watling: So you would agree with Dr Katy Scott, who commented that “the Hundred is an unnecessary addition to an already crowded schedule, which pushes all other games to the less temperate ends of the season.” Do you think that might be the case?

Andy Nash: Lawrence Booth, who is one of the better known cricket journalists, described the schedule for next summer as a quart stuffed into a pint pot. I have a copy of the draft schedule here, and it is pretty clear, when you look at the detail, why last year 86% of cricket fans, according to *The Cricketer* magazine, in a big cricket survey, opposed The Hundred, and this year the figure was 84%.

The fans own this game; it is not owned by the administrators. You are all reading your own social media feeds. We have been following this while we have been sitting here since 2.30 this afternoon. The fans feel as though the game is being taken away from them. They do not support The Hundred. They can see the damage that it is going to do to the existing three formats.

Q137 Giles Watling: In your view, is that lack of support because they don't support the format or because it might damage the county games—the other areas?

Andy Nash: Well, nobody supports the format; it is not played anywhere. As we heard earlier this afternoon, it was invented by a marketing committee somewhere within the ECB. Clearly, it is going to damage the other three competitions. The County Championship, which is the bedrock of test cricket, and which is still the biggest financial contributor to the game of cricket in England, now finds itself principally played in April, May and, next year, right through to the end of September. Well, you won't have to look very far to find professional cricketers and their coaches being justifiably critical of that.

The 50—well, I think the trophies have now gone, but the memory of them lingers on.

Chair: They are out of shot, but they are still here.

Andy Nash: The 50—the women started playing World Cup cricket in 1973 and it took them, I think, 46 years to win it, but they won it. The men took two years less, 44 years, before they won it. But they weren't won on a whim. It wasn't a plan four years ago; I think the plan was at least seven years old, because I was on the board at the time.



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Coming back to your question, next year the 50 will not only be deprived of the top 100 players in the country, but there will be no overseas players in it, it won't be played at any of the test match grounds, and it will be played alongside The Hundred. So it is a second XI-calibre competition. What kind of preparation is that for us to defend those trophies over the next four years?

Lastly, in the case of the Blast, Eoin Morgan may have misspoken the truth a few weeks ago. The England white-ball captain very boldly said—good on him for saying it—that there is no room for four competitions in England and Wales. Something has to go. If The Hundred stays, the Blast will go. There is one slight problem with that: if you take the Blast away, I suspect you will consign 10 non-test match grounds to a semi-professional future.

Q138 Chair: Becky, did you want to come in on that as well?

Becky Fairlie-Clarke: Yes, thank you. The Cricket Supporters Association is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that brings together cricket fans from across the spectrum to give them a voice. That is our aim. We believe that cricket fans have a really big role to play in the prosperity and growth of cricket and in the governance of cricket as we move forward, and that they can be a positive influence on the game. Interestingly, there absolutely is a split among cricket fans about The Hundred. There are surveys such as that by *The Cricketer*, which is a well-known publication, but responses to our recent survey were more polarised: 52% think that The Hundred will have a negative impact on the existing county structure.

The Cricket Supporters Association is not here to be anti-Hundred, but there are real and legitimate concerns about what it means for the rest of the game, as Andy was saying. There is the county structure and, as Andy mentioned, what that means for test players. We all know that for fans, test cricket is the pinnacle of the sport. How will that move forward? If we are not playing test cricket very well, how will that affect the broadcast rights? If England aren't playing test cricket very well, who would want to show them? We have really big concerns for test cricket and for ODIs.

From a cricket fan perspective, a large amount of that comes from the way The Hundred has been launched. It was originally said that it was not for existing cricket fans, so you are basically telling them, "During the peak of the summer you just have to watch whatever cricket is available, but it won't be the county cricket that you love." There is what is perceived as a lack of transparency about it. We are not sure what success really looks like, or how it will grow the recreational game or the first-class county game. It is great to think that there will be all these new people who love cricket, but how will they be driven then to support their county? How will they know about their local club? How will they know where they can go and play? There are a lot of questions around it that still need to be answered for cricket fans.

Q139 Giles Watling: I feel that I know the answer to this question before I ask it. You don't think that the new format will engage new audiences and



drive up participation generally across the board?

Becky Fairlie-Clarke: It could well be of interest to a new audience. Obviously there are some great players playing in some great venues, and we all know that if the sun is shining there is nothing better than watching cricket, so absolutely there is an opportunity to appeal to a new audience. As I say, that is a great thing. We want more cricket fans. We want more people to engage in cricket. What is not clear is how that will then work its way down as a funnel to the rest of the game.

Q140 **Giles Watling:** I would like to hear Andy's view on that. Do you think we will get new participants as a result of the introduction of The Hundred?

Andy Nash: To answer Ms Stevens's earlier question, this is going to cost about £60 million a year to put on, so if it doesn't get new fans, it is going to be about £200 million or so invested over the period simply to cannibalise the existing game. I cannot believe that it is in the best interests of the national governing body to do that.

Q141 **Giles Watling:** Do you think it is in the interests of the players? The players will no longer be exposed to the longer forms of the game. Do you think that will have a knock-on effect?

Andy Nash: You cannot blame the players, who have a short and perilous career, for following the money. I would do the same in their shoes. We saw them apply for the draft on Sunday. The reality is that, in addition to there being only overseas coaches across the eight teams, only 77 English players out of a total of 400 English players were picked up, and there were some 36 Kolpaks. Looking at social media this morning, you have some pretty upset and cross cricketers who have realised that they are being left on the sidelines. Twenty per cent. of the English players probably will earn nearly a year's salary for six weeks' work. Their teammates are back to the grind in the 50, playing in a second eleven competition played on out grounds.

Q142 **Giles Watling:** Just a final question to all four of you. Do you think the ECB has engaged enough with you across the board—particularly the fans?

Becky Fairlie-Clarke: In our recent survey, 90% of fans agreed that supporters need to be given the opportunity to work with the ECB to insist on keeping the game relevant. An important factor to mention is that over half the people who answered our survey agreed that cricket does need to evolve to remain relevant. I don't think there is any fan sitting there thinking, "Cricket is just absolutely perfect as it is. We don't need to evolve."

There are concerns about the ECB, the decisions that are being made and the fact that the fans aren't being consulted on this. Existing fans—the people you would imagine that it would want to hold closest—are feeling left out of the loop: 65% disagree that the ECB considers existing cricket fans when making important future decisions, and 55% disagree that the ECB is looking after the best interests of cricket.



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However, I will add a caveat to that: as the Cricket Supporters Association develops and grows, we are establishing a working relationship with the ECB. There is movement, particularly from our organisation, in terms of having a conversation with the ECB.

Q143 Giles Watling: Thank you. Anybody else?

Laura Cordingley: I can say from a school strategy perspective—"Inspiring Generations" was mentioned quite a bit in the ECB session—that Chance to Shine have been consulted right from the outset, and we have been thoroughly involved in the conversations about how best to shape that.

Andy Nash: You probably heard earlier from the chairman of the ECB that the counties and their fans had been consulted. I think he even used the "vote" word. I sent out a tweet to that effect, and I have had a blizzard of responses, overwhelmingly saying, "The fans weren't consulted", and, "Most definitely no vote". Just before I took the stand here, I had heard from fans of 12 of the 18 counties, and I think that would be a pretty uniform picture. The fans are not behind this, and they are not going to get behind it because they can see the existential risk to the game of doing so.

Giles Watling: I think the twittersphere might be interesting after this session.

Q144 Chair: Andy Nash, can I just ask one question? Jo Stevens asked a number of questions of Tom Harrison, trying to get an idea of what the budget was. We didn't quite make that clear. You seem to know what the budget is. There was some shaking of heads behind you when you gave that figure. I would be interested to know where you got that figure of £60 million.

Andy Nash: There has been a leak from the ECB. The budget was put into the public domain about two weeks ago. You can clearly see that, when you add to the expenditure 19 times £1.3 million, that takes it up to about £60 million, so The Hundred is going to lose about £20 million a year over the duration, which is a pretty substantial sum. You have had evidence from a gentleman—Christopher O'Brien—which Mr Efford picked up earlier. The plain fact is that the last four years for the ECB have been very disappointing, in terms of financial performance. It has lost £60 million at a pre-tax level, and the reserves have correspondingly dropped from over £70 million to about £11 million. One of the reasons why it is called "an almighty punt" is that they really are betting the farm that the money that is coming in on the next TV deal—starting next year—will pay back with the investment in The Hundred. If it doesn't, who knows what the next TV deal will be renewed at? Therein lies the germ of a potentially major financial crisis for the game.

Q145 Clive Efford: I have already covered part of what I was going to ask, but I will plough on. Mr Nash, you resigned from the ECB last year over concerns about corporate governance. Do you think anything has improved since then?



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Andy Nash: I don't know, is the answer. The reason I resigned—I am sorry to bring Ms Stevens into this as the Glamorgan Member—was that I discovered that a third of the ECB's reserves had been paid to Glamorgan, by reading *The Times* newspaper. Given that I was a serving member of the ECB, I did not have a particularly high regard for that. That was not the first transgression of corporate governance that I witnessed.

The month after I went, I was followed by Richard Thompson, the chairman of Surrey, who also cited corporate governance failures and the payments that were allegedly about to be made to other counties. We were vindicated when the Good Governance Institute came back with a review that revealed no less than, I think, 11 areas requiring attention where there were shortfalls in the standards of corporate governance.

Q146 Clive Efford: To drill into that, what is wrong about those payments specifically? Was it not an attempt to redistribute the money that was coming into the game? Lots of money comes in through the big-ticket games of test matches and all the rest of it, so was it an attempt to redistribute that around the game to those counties that were not part of that, or was it something else?

Andy Nash: You would have to ask the chairman of the ECB what the intent was behind it, because I personally have still not received an explanation. I am equally baffled, in the case of Mr Lucas's county, that Durham received the most severe reprimand and penalty points for their financially straitened circumstances. Glamorgan were in equally straitened financial circumstances and we are still waiting to hear why no penalty was levied on them.

Q147 Clive Efford: What was the reaction of other counties when this was going on? We have heard that board members were resigning. Does the corporate governance structure that exists allow for counties to raise their concerns about such issues?

Andy Nash: The reaction of the counties at the time was one of unbridled fury. That resulted in, if there were going to be any further payments, them certainly not being made. We did read in the press, however, that other counties had been given promises of further payments.

As regards corporate governance now, I cannot speak to that, because I have been off the board for some 18 months. As you can imagine, however, it is an issue of some importance when the reserves are now as low as they are. Payments to the counties are a very important and a very closely followed aspect of ECB governance.

Q148 Clive Efford: How financially sustainable is the existing county structure?

Andy Nash: Well, despite the fact that I have set rather a negative tone thus far, it has got to be said that last year was a fantastic success for cricket—an enormous success. Apart from the fact that we are now double world champions, which bears reiteration, there was an outstanding series for the Ashes on a par with 1981, probably, in terms of the fans' engagement. It was an all-round outstanding year for the game, which,



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again, begs the question: why on earth put it all at risk, when the participation is turning around and the followship and fanship are climbing, by introducing something completely different? A lot of people in the game are completely baffled as to why that is thought to be the best way to proceed.

Q149 Clive Efford: On bidding for test matches, what are the implications of reducing the number of test matches that counties can bid for to six from 2020?

Andy Nash: For the test match grounds, of which there are now eight, that is an enormous part of their revenue. The ECB has, probably quite rightly, taken certain compensatory steps. For example, Notts are now going to host the final of the 50-over competition, albeit, sadly, it will not be at a level that it once was. Edgbaston, again, has the long-term rights or agreement to host the T20 finals day.

On that point, I must mention, lest I forget, that it has taken us 16 years to get T20 right here in England—16 years—but we got there, finally, with attendance up 54% in the last five years. Many games are now sell-out and the counties could not conceivably do without it. On next year's schedule, then, it is disappointing that the final is three months after the end of the group stages.

Q150 Clive Efford: Can you enlighten us on the reason for that?

Andy Nash: I come back to Eoin Morgan's point—you can't fit four competitions into the English domestic summer. It is just not sustainable, and everybody in cricket knows it.

Q151 Clive Efford: Has the fallow year payment that was made to Glamorgan had any knock-on impact for other counties to be able to attract third-party investment?

Andy Nash: I don't know. You have the additional complication at Glamorgan, where a large creditor—I think I'm right in saying it was Cardiff City Council—had to take a write-off on its debt. That certainly has a knock-on impact for other counties who were looking to local authorities or councils to help them fund things like ground improvements.

Q152 Clive Efford: Other members of the panel may want to comment on this question. The ECB's independent governance review recommended that it takes a wider view of stakeholder engagement. Has there been any change in the approach?

Becky Fairlie-Clarke: Not that we've seen. We are now developing a relationship with the ECB from a fan's perspective, but I couldn't comment on other stakeholders.

Q153 Clive Efford: Do you have a comment on that, Mr Nash?

Andy Nash: I certainly have a comment, which is that we heard that all is sweetness and light between ECB and the counties, and I would suggest that that is not quite the case. If you haven't had the opportunity of speaking to some of the county chairmen, I would encourage you to do so.



It is worth noting that there is a document now circulating that relates to the formation of a professional game board within cricket—Chair, you referred to that earlier, in that one already exists for both soccer and rugby union. I think that was always going to be an inevitable consequence of disenfranchising the 18 first-class counties and the MCC from the ECB main board. It is the only NGB in sport to have done so and that could only ever result in a pushback, because the 18 counties and the MCC own all the grounds and employ all the players. In the case of the FA, they at least own Wembley, and the RFU own Twickenham. That is not the case in cricket.

Q154 Clive Efford: Laura and Chris, looking on all this and the way it has been described, do you have any concerns about how it will impact on your work in the future?

Chris Willetts: The Hundred? Or the financial situation?

Clive Efford: The financial situation, which may be impacted on by The Hundred.

Chris Willetts: Yes. I think there are some positive noises attached to the new ECB strategy about how it is going to enable the county boards to work in partnership with the third sector and other organisations to do some of the work around engaging new audiences and using cricket to work on social outcomes, which the ECB is probably not hitting its potential on at the moment.

On The Hundred in particular, the idea of the simplified format is going to be helped if we can weave that into youth participation. It is obviously going to be much easier to understand if people are playing the same format, which I am not aware of happening at the moment. Personally, I think there is a place for competitive cricket that sits alongside Chance to Shine's school work and All Stars Cricket, which is bringing kids into clubs. We find that kids who tend to choose football or other games tend to choose those games because there is an opportunity to compete and represent more readily. Those are also the things that prevent kids from getting involved in gangs and being radicalised and so on—having a peer group and a support network and using their time positively, and having opportunities for accolades and to succeed. Perhaps The Hundred presents that opportunity.

Laura Cordingley: I will add to that. I completely agree in terms of competition. The Street was developed to be a bedrock of competition for young people. I completely agree that they turn up week in, week out, and they want to test themselves. They want to play against each other, but they also want to play against people from different parts of the country and different parts of their locality. Every child who takes part in the Street is given the opportunity to take part in local, regional and national competitions. We have some brilliant examples. If you take Yorkshire, some of our projects in Chickenley and Kirklees come together to play against each other. The teams actually self-identified that there was a disparity in the standard. They said, "Well, can we mix ourselves up



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to make it a more even, so that we can have more fun?" Those children were from very different backgrounds; we had white working class and British-south Asian young people. Competition really does make a big difference—for girls as well as boys. In our Street competitions there is a girls' pathway as much as there is a boys'.

I go back, Mr Efford, to your question on the investment in the game. I sit here as an independent charity. We are anticipating an uplift in funding from ECB around the desire to support more young people, which is fantastic. But standing by ourselves in terms of good governance, we obviously look to diversify our fundraising as much as we can. We have a relationship with Sport England, but we also fundraise through other means—through individuals who support us, through events, through trusts and foundations, and through corporate partners—and it is really important to us that we continue to do that as an independent charity.

Q155 Clive Efford: Do any of you have a view on gambling making so much money out of cricket and not putting anything back in?

Becky Fairlie-Clarke: I hate it. It seems ridiculous, especially within cricket. When remarkable things happen, as they do—if someone bowls a really bad ball, it has got to be just a legitimate bad ball. But we all know that gambling and spot-fixing happens within cricket—hopefully it is not widespread. The idea that betting companies make so much money on the game that we love, and that they do not put anything back into the game, is ridiculous.

Andy Nash: It's a huge issue for cricket, and I know that ECB, along with other governing boards overseas, take it incredibly seriously because of the involvement of professionalised criminal gangs. They put a huge amount of time and effort, quite rightly, into trying to protect and educate the players and the ground staff who are trying to spot those involved in this at ground level, but it is very difficult.

Laura Cordingley: I would echo what Becky said. If money is being made, there is a responsibility to invest some of it. From a Chance to Shine perspective, as a young person's charity, we would not have a direct relationship with a gambling firm on our programmes. But if they were to invest in the good of the game, I would be supportive of that.

Chris Willetts: I would agree with that. The negative side of gambling disproportionately affects the communities where cricket is played least.

Q156 Giles Watling: A very quick question. We've done a bit of Hundred-bashing, but I want to look on the positive side of things and ask a very simple question. There has been a lot of excitement engendered around cricket thanks to these great victories and, as you say, the fantastic summer of cricket that we've just had. In a positive way, what way forward should we go? We can talk about the engagement of kids or the engagement of small communities, but how do we harness that excitement?



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Andy Nash: From the professional game's point of view, there is a ready-made solution on the shelf. It is the one that we recommended in 2016 when I chaired a domestic structure review group: the T20 should be divisionalised, with nine teams in both. The top tier would become the English premier league, and—hey presto!—there is England's answer to the very successful IPL and BBL.

Q157 **Giles Watling:** So in your view, a simple, off-the-shelf solution.

Andy Nash: It's still there, and I think it is still what the fans would like. It is my contention that it would be a far more hard-headed business route to follow, because it is much lower risk than The Hundred. It will cost nothing like as much as The Hundred to get off the ground. Bear in mind that in Harvard Business School's definitive study on new product development, some 80% to 90% of new products launched in the western world fail. If The Hundred goes ahead, cricket cannot afford for it to fail, because we will be left with an existential financial crisis. Where is the justification for taking such a high-risk route when there is the ready-made solution on the shelf that I think virtually all stakeholders, the fans most of all, will cheer from the rooftops?

Q158 **Giles Watling:** How can we harness the excitement and engagement of children, as well?

Laura Cordingley: From a children's perspective, we have certainly seen an increase in schools reaching out to us on the back of the World Cup, asking how they can have cricket and how Chance to Shine can support them. Ultimately, we are bound by our resources. We support one in four state schools, and we are in 200 communities. If we can do more, we can engage more young people. At the moment, to reach further than our physical resource and coaching network, we have developed a digital portal that every school in the country can access free of charge so that they can deliver high-quality cricket PE through schools. It is completely mapped to the national curriculum and has World Cup-themed resources, enabling schools to continue to access that, bring joy and, ultimately, help children to continue to participate. It is about giving them access to grassroots cricket opportunities.

We have some solutions, but we are not the only solution; we need to work in partnership with Government, who have a role to play, certainly on the school sport and physical activity action plan, to help get young people an hour a day of physical sporting activities. There is also a bit there in helping us to further diversify and to engage communities through programmes such as Street and others.

Becky Fairlie-Clarke: I would add a free-to-air discussion because, as we all know from the Cricket World Cup, 4.5 million watched the final on Channel 4, which is terrific. Imagine how many more would have watched if they had been able to see some of the build-up to the World Cup final and not just the last thing. With free-to-air, people were talking about cricket, which was also terrific, but then, when the Ashes were on, they could not watch it and it had suddenly gone. Unless you are an ardent



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cricket fan who will pay the money, you cannot watch Ashes cricket again. The free-to-air side of it is really important.

Anecdotally, at my little boy's school, we are the odd family because we play and love cricket. His friends were all talking about cricket, and then, suddenly, it is out of consciousness—the football season starts, and it is all about football again. The free-to-air argument is a really big one. We are very much behind the idea—95% of our members agree—that, moving forward, part of all ICC tournaments should be free-to-air, whether online or on TV. That should be how it is moving forward so that the build-up to the final can take place and people can get behind it. Then, you are building heroes, and having heroes and household names keeps cricket relevant and part of the household conversation, instead of one hit, which was terrific, but then it is gone again.

Giles Watling: A good point well made.

Q159 **Julian Knight:** I will come to terrestrial TV in a second, as I want to drill down on that. First, Mr Nash, you said earlier that The Hundred will lose £20 million in the first year. How did you get that figure?

Andy Nash: By subtracting the revenue from the costs.

Q160 **Julian Knight:** The revenue has been TV revenue?

Andy Nash: TV is the most significant part of the annual revenue, but there is also money in the budget for overseas rights, commercial deals and so on.

Q161 **Julian Knight:** Is the advent of The Hundred a reflection, to a certain extent, of the fact that the game is very top heavy? For years, the game has relied on test cricket and the subsequent broadcasting rights to effectively pay for county cricket. Is the fact that there is that disconnect and difference in the power base due to that financial reality?

Andy Nash: Do you mean the power base between different counties?

Julian Knight: No, I mean between the ECB and the counties. The fact is that, as we know, the ECB has a set of contracts. The revenue comes from Test cricket in order, basically, for the counties to function. This is not meant to be disrespectful to county cricket, which I love, but beggars can't be choosers in that respect.

Andy Nash: The ECB is the counties, and vice versa. It is just that, on occasion, that can be quite a testy relationship, especially when it comes to carving up the financial cake. Colin Graves was elected—I was one of those who elected him; there were only 19 of us—on a platform of cutting cost and complexity at the ECB. That hasn't happened. In fact, the headcount has gone from 250 in 2014 to 372 this year. That is before we add in the incremental posts who will be employed by The Hundred. That means there are now more people working for the ECB than there are playing professional cricket here in England and Wales. When we talk about cost, which I took to be the seat of your question, cricket has to look in on itself at the amount of cost it currently has tied up in



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administration. Again—I keep coming back to this—there is a hard-headed way forward that plays the percentages for English domestic cricket, and I hope for the sake of all of us who are fans of the game that the right decision ultimately will be taken.

- Q162 **Julian Knight:** The kernel of this is to do with the power imbalance between the ECB and the counties. If you take football, for example, you have the Premier League, which is the FA Premier League. Okay, the FA Premier League is a very powerful body, but it is not going to do stuff, frankly, against Manchester United, Manchester City and so on. In this instance, although the ECB suggests very strenuously that it has had a vote and that this, effectively, is a majority decision, you are suggesting that, effectively, this has been run roughshod over the counties. Is that not just a circumstance of that power imbalance, due to the financial situation that most counties find themselves in vis-à-vis the ECB?

Andy Nash: The ECB do an awful lot of good as well. We have heard that from the grassroots. A lot of the things that they are doing, such as All Stars, the south Asian project and women's cricket, have been, up until recently, terrific. However, there is always going to be a power struggle between where the money is being divvied up within cricket. There is no doubt that, at the moment, there is a major power struggle going on between the counties and the ECB over how the doubling of the media deal—it has come in at £1.1 billion compared with £425 million for five years—is going to flow through the game. The counties are not going to rebel from the ECB—they are going to do what has happened in football and in rugby union and set up their own umbrella group within the auspices of the ECB—but I am pretty clear that you will see a transition of power away from the ECB centre back towards the counties. It is going to be redressed along the lines I think you were alluding to in football.

- Q163 **Julian Knight:** You are talking about a split in the game, basically.

Andy Nash: Yes, where the clubs are more powerful.

- Q164 **Julian Knight:** Ms Fairlie-Clarke, from a cricket fan perspective, does the format of The Hundred offer anything new or refreshing? Are you looking forward to seeing it next summer?

Becky Fairlie-Clarke: The feedback that I have is, as I say, very split. Some 64% say they will not go and watch cricket in the grounds, and 40% say they will not watch it online, but caught up in all that is the idea that they do not really know as much about it as they want to, to be able to—

- Q165 **Julian Knight:** They are just reading quite negative headlines.

Becky Fairlie-Clarke: Yes. I would also say that the younger audience—the 16 to 24-year-olds in our survey—seem to be keener on it than the older audience, as you might expect.

- Q166 **Julian Knight:** So it appeals to a younger demographic?

Becky Fairlie-Clarke: Potentially, yes. In terms of the format, there is still bowling, there is still batting and there are still overs. Yes, we all want



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to see good cricketers play cricket, but there is nothing in the format that I think particularly appeals to existing cricket fans, because we understand the game and we love the game. Also, I don't really understand the idea that it is going to be easier for people to understand. As far as I am aware, people can count to six and they can count to 10. As I say, there is a real mix among cricket fans, but, as you know, there is generally a lot of negativity around it as well.

Q167 Julian Knight: Laura—and Chris, actually; I will just bring you in from the perspective of someone who works in grassroots cricket—what do you think the impact of The Hundred could be on grassroots?

Chris Willetts: I think the interesting part of it is, No. 1, the players—the quality and the backgrounds of players that come into it, and the impact that will have. Also, you can see some of the logic behind moving towards the city-based thing, because I think the status quo, and the rejigging of the status quo in any way, is not really having an impact on a lot of the kids we work with. The kids we work with in south-east London come under Kent as a county—they wouldn't have been to Canterbury and don't know that they are in Kent. So there is not that engagement.

Of course, generally, what brings people in to participate in sport, and certainly into supporting the sport, is either their background in playing or their affiliation to a town, region or city—that sort of thing. So I think there is some logic behind that side of it. I think the format will only prove of any use if, as I said earlier, kids are playing in a similar format. I think if they are playing in the same format, and it's T20, I think they can relate to it just as easily.

Laura Cordingley: We haven't specifically surveyed children around format, because I guess, where we operate, they get enjoyment from whacking a ball and just generally playing the game. I would say, in terms of Street, that we know they do like a short format, and Street, effectively, is countdown cricket, so it's 20 balls; it's fast, it's fun, it's loud. I can see that if The Hundred brings that kind of environment, then, yes, it would appeal to young people. Clearly we are not there yet, so we need to wait and see. From our perspective, whether it is Hundred or T20—some kids probably like test matches—it is mostly about them physically, regularly participating in the game. As I said before, we are very willing to work with the ECB around testing The Hundred with young people in the run-up to the competition, as part of our Street programme, to see how it goes down, and to get them involved.

Q168 Julian Knight: Do you both find that, effectively, at the moment, what is happening is a bit like the premier leaguings of countries? I imagine it is quite frustrating being a Korean footballer, when you walk around and basically everyone's got an Arsenal shirt or a United shirt on. Is this the case with the IPL? Are we finding that lots of young people are walking round with Kohli shirts on, and that sort of thing?



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Chris Willetts: No, I think you'll find our young people walk around with Man United shirts on. But it is a serious point, because I think there are as many things that we can learn from that as from another cricket form.

Laura Cordingley: I agree. I can even give you an example. I went to a primary school in Luton, where those kids are absolutely cricket crazy. They love their cricket. They couldn't actually name many professional cricketers, but they loved the sport. They were learning through it and they really enjoyed it. So from our perspective the job is almost done in terms of engaging them. If they pick up role models along the way, that is fantastic. I don't think we are quite at the stage where they are wearing shirts, yet, though. I would quite agree.

Q169 **Julian Knight:** Becky, I want to ask you two final questions. With terrestrial TV you said before you want to see free to air. Do you recognise there is a trade-off, though, in terms of Sky, the money, etc? I hear the story that effectively when negotiations were once carried out with the terrestrial broadcaster, the terrestrial broadcaster asked cricket, "How much are you going to pay us to show cricket?" Do you recognise that sort of trade-off?

Becky Fairlie-Clarke: Absolutely. I think it would be ridiculous if we did not recognise the amount of money that Sky has put into cricket and is putting into cricket, and the good work that has been done with those funds. That is why with our membership we are talking about ICC tournaments as well, so obviously that is a slightly different ball game. But yes, we can totally understand that, but I guess it is just what compromise can be made: where can there be some more free-to-air coverage? We always think of test cricket, but I would be the first to think, "Would a terrestrial TV broadcaster want to put five days of cricket on?" That is a lot of the schedule. But can there be just more instances when there is free to air, whether it is domestic games—you know, the county games—international, or whatever the tournament might be? I cannot help but think that all the great work that these guys do on the ground is terrific, but if these kids are not in a cricket family—they go home, they love cricket, but they have no other way to access cricket; their parents are not going to pay for Sky, or necessarily show them the way to see cricket—how can they carry on? How can they get in to participate? There is only so much that a kid can do on their own, unless they can go, "Look at this! This is a great game! This is the game that I play!" I don't know. I think it is a shame that there is all this terrific work going on but there is obviously a disconnect along the way.

Q170 **Julian Knight:** You mean that the biggest way of getting into their lives is not being utilised properly.

Becky Fairlie-Clarke: Yes. We all know that TVs are in every household—I don't know the figure, but most families have one.

Q171 **Julian Knight:** Finally, you just mentioned Sky and the money going in but—flipside of that—do you sometimes feel, frankly, as a cricket fan, you are often being milked on the cricket prices? Test cricket, I used to go—I



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was a Surrey member many years ago—and it was about £15 to see a test match in 2002. It is now £120, or £100, to see a test match. For the World Cup final, I think it was £250 in certain stands. For a cricket fan, that is a really expensive undertaking.

Becky Fairlie-Clarke: Absolutely. There are definitely instances where cricket prices are crazy high but, in our research, cricket is seen as quite good value for fans compared with other sports. If you think, it is an expensive ticket, but it is for the whole day, so you are getting entertained from 10.30 until 6.30, whenever stumps are. That is quite a long time. Absolutely, there is a concern about ticket prices and the fact that you have to pay for Sky or BT Sport, but that's the world we live in. We are used to it. But yes, ticket prices—and the secondary ticketing is obviously a really important factor for fans, because that can be crazy.

Chair: I am conscious that we have been going for three hours and 20 minutes, I think—we could even have accommodated a T20 game during this session. We will have one quick question from Clive Efford.

Q172 Clive Efford: To comment on that last answer, the argument put to me when I have discussed this in the past with the ECB—about taking a test match from, say, the Ashes and putting it on terrestrial TV—is that it would result in a huge reduction in the amount of money they get for their TV rights, which would seriously eat into their ability to invest in grassroots activities. I am not putting that forward as my argument, but I am interested to hear your comment on it.

Becky Fairlie-Clarke: I would love to know from other cricket fans whether that would be a worthwhile trade-off. Everyone would love to see test cricket on free to air. It is the pinnacle of the game—we know that. It is the format all our members want to watch the most, spend their money on, everything. But when you put it like that, what would the trade-off be?

Q173 Clive Efford: I should add, the quid pro quo is the highlights package. What they get on terrestrial TV is the highlights package—truncated coverage, rather than encouraging kids to sit around all day for five days, which I used to do to watch an entire test match. In this day and age, are they better off with a truncated set of highlights?

Becky Fairlie-Clarke: I think it is true—I know that Tom Harrison covered this earlier—the way that children consume media is so different these days, and we shouldn't get too hooked up on TV, I guess. There are the online channels, free social media channels, and so on. I don't know what the answer is, I'm afraid, and I would love to know—I think it is something we will have to go out to our fans with, on test match cricket, to see what they say.

Q174 Chair: Thank you. I have one final question for Andy Nash, to pick up on something you said earlier. You and Julian Knight were both talking about the comparison between football and cricket, and Julian was alluding to the massive difference from the football authorities—we had them sitting at that bench on Monday—and how the Premier League generates the cash, not the FA, whereas in cricket the cash seems to be generated



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through the national game, the ECB, with the counties reliant on that money. A lot of counties are in quite substantial financial difficulties and require ECB support. I was interested in what you said about the way the counties might try to organise themselves. Can you see a scenario in which they are ultimately no longer reliant on ECB financial support?

Andy Nash: There are a number of questions in there. First, I do not accept that most cricket counties have financial problems.

Chair: I said a good number, not lots.

Andy Nash: There is about £200 million of debt in the game, but most of that is accounted for by just four counties. The other 14, plus MCC, do not have a particular debt issue. As far as the rights are concerned, I think that you will see the pendulum swing back towards the counties; they will particularly look to monetise the T20 Blast.

Q175 **Chair:** By that do you mean that they would seek, as the Premier League did, to negotiate for themselves the broadcast contract for that?

Andy Nash: Yes. If you see—there is no reason why you should not ask to see it—the document circulating about the professional game board, you will see that they have already had research carried out on the media value of the T20 Blast. I think that they intend to take control of the domestic schedule and, in part, to take control of the media value that is ascribed to that.

Q176 **Chair:** Would they share the TV money equally between all the counties in the T20 Blast?

Andy Nash: That is an issue for them. You would hope that it will be at least equitable. It does not look as though it will be equitable in The Hundred, because in the men's game, which, as the ECB has told us by its own gender pay gap is worth 10 times more than the women's game, the funds will principally flow through to the eight test match grounds, as host venues.

Q177 **Chair:** The reason I ask is that TV revenue in the Premier League is equalised. Yes, it is true that Man United's matchday revenue is higher than Burnley's, but nevertheless, the TV money that underpins it is the same. If you did not have that in a two-tier T20 Blast, my concern would be that you would accelerate the process whereby the big wealthy counties get richer while the smaller ones fall away because they just cannot compete.

Andy Nash: That will happen under The Hundred—there is no doubt about it. The fact that the counties are now co-operating on their own PGB is interesting because it means that some of the largest, such as Surrey, actually have a lot of respect for the 18-counties system and have no real wish to see eight of them break away in elite status. There are reasons for optimism that the ECB PGB will settle down in years to come and we will hopefully see a financial settlement that promotes not just 18 counties but why not 24? Durham joined; why shouldn't the likes of Norfolk and others?



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They should have the incentive. You touched on that earlier with the pyramid structure. Why not have promotion and relegation?

Q178 Chair: I was not thinking necessarily of a bigger County Championship. You can have promotion and relegation, but of course, whether you have that sort of pyramid or a bigger championship in which the money is shared equally but everyone gets a bit less because there are more of them, or you have someone getting a lot but there is not very much, there are challenges whichever way you try to cut the cake. Finally, do you think that the problem rests with the players themselves? Ultimately, they will go where the money is, and if there are no formats that reward the players, they will play elsewhere.

Andy Nash: They will—you cannot blame them for that. The other thing that has arisen since Sunday, with the draft, is that the players are beginning to realise that they are probably better off being at a test team venue, because the Trent Rockets have picked mainly Notts players and not a single player from their neighbours Derby and Leicester. That sends a pretty loud message through the professional community and their agents. That will be an extremely negative development for the game.

Chair: I think we will have to draw stumps. I thank all our witnesses very much for their time this afternoon.