

Welsh Affairs Committee

EVIDENCE SUBMISSION

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Welsh Rugby Union (WRU)

**Subject: Consultation outcome and the
importance of rugby in Wales**

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1. Executive narrative for the Welsh Affairs Committee

1.1 This evidence is provided to support the Committee's scrutiny of the Welsh Rugby Union's ("WRU") decisions regarding the future structure of the men's professional game. It explains why intervention became unavoidable, how decisions have been taken, and why the WRU believes the current programme of reform is credible, controlled and in the long-term interests of Welsh rugby as a whole.

1.2 The WRU fully recognises the emotional and cultural significance of rugby in Wales. For that reason, the Board's approach has been to act deliberately rather than precipitously, to consult widely before deciding, and to ensure that reform strengthens, rather than destabilises the wider rugby system.

1.3 In summary, this submission demonstrates that the WRU's approach has been evidence-led, transparent, and proportionate. Reform of the professional game is being used as a lever to strengthen pathways and community rugby rather than displace them. Decisions are supported by defined, multi-year investment and independent governance assurance. The WRU recognises the sensitivity of these changes and has sought to balance urgency with responsibility, acting where necessary while preserving system capacity.

2. Starting position and inherited constraints (mid-2023)

2.1 When the current Chair was appointed in July 2023, the WRU inherited a system already under strain. Financial resilience had been weakened, management information was insufficient to support effective strategic decision-making, and the long-term reduction in recurring income following the CVC transactions^{[\[1\]](#)} had not been fully reflected in sustainable operating plans.

2.2 At the same time, relationships with key stakeholders, particularly the professional teams (regions), were fragile. This limited the WRU's ability to secure collective solutions and meant that risk increasingly sat across the system rather than being actively managed.

3. Escalating pressures and why inaction was not an option (2024–early 2025)

3.1 During 2024, pressures intensified rather than stabilised. On-field performance further declined at both regional and national level, while the level of investment available to each

professional team was insufficient to remain competitive. Regional balance sheets weakened further, increasing systemic risk.

3.2 The Professional Rugby Agreement 2023 which we were working under constrained flexibility and transferred financial risk to the regions while limiting the WRU's ability to manage debt, invest strategically or plan for long-term sustainability. The proposed new Professional Rugby Agreement 2025 ("PRA 2025") sought to stabilise the system, but despite extensive engagement over a 10-month period it did not command consensus.

3.3 Cardiff Rugby going into administration in April 2025 represented a critical stress-test. WRU intervention was necessary to protect professional rugby in the capital city, meet United Rugby Championship ("URC") league participation obligations and prevent wider contagion risk across the system. This intervention led the WRU Board (the "Board") to conclude that the existing model was not resilient or sustainable. In the absence of intervention, the Board concluded that the risk of further regional club failure, unmanaged financial exposure, and progressive erosion of pathways and public confidence had increased materially.

4. The Consultation Process

4.1 In May 2025, the Board concluded that further incremental negotiation would not resolve the underlying structural issues. The core question was no longer contractual, but structural, the WRU therefore chose to consult nationally. This was a deliberate decision to rebuild legitimacy, test assumptions, and ensure that any reform was informed by evidence rather than expediency.

4.2 The consultation ran throughout September 2025 and engaged players, clubs, community representatives, supporters, volunteers, and governing bodies. An independent third party recorded, transcribed and analysed all consultation meetings. We also applied consistent methodologies across both consultation meetings and our engagement programme with fans and general public via public survey responses. This ensured that the Board's conclusions were informed by robust, independently validated evidence, and not by selective or internal interpretation.

4.3 In addition to public engagement, the WRU undertook a programme of 31 formal consultation meetings to ensure structured input from a broad range of stakeholders across the Welsh rugby system. This included four dedicated meetings with players and the Welsh Rugby Players' Association ("WRPA"), three (two open forum held in North Wales and South Wales) consultation meetings for community clubs, and a series of meetings with the owners and senior management teams of each of the four professional clubs.



4.4 The programme also included consultation with all ten Super Rygbi Cymru (“SRC”) clubs, supporters’ clubs representing each professional team, and professional rugby bodies, including the URC and European Professional Club Rugby (“EPCR”). In addition, the WRU convened meetings with an independent sporting advisory panel, including Sarah Powell (former Chief Executive of British Gymnastics) and – the now sadly departed - Hugh Morris (former Director of Cricket at the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB)). Discussions were also held with local authorities associated with the professional clubs and a round-table session involving Members of Parliament and Members of the Senedd. Together, these engagements ensured that the consultation reflected perspectives from across governance, competition, workforce, community, and public policy stakeholders.

4.5 Alongside structured stakeholder engagement, the WRU undertook a public engagement survey, hosted online and open throughout the consultation period, to ensure that supporters and the wider rugby community were able to contribute directly to the process. The survey formed a central part of the evidence base considered by the Board, capturing both quantitative data and detailed narrative feedback on the future of elite rugby in Wales. It is important to note that the survey included an opportunity to provide open-ended feedback as well as multiple choice questions, with many contributors taking up this option.

4.6 The consultation microsite received over 23,000 visits, with more than 14,800 survey visits and 7,100 completed survey responses, alongside nearly 4,900 detailed open-text comments. This level of participation provided a robust and representative insight into public opinion and ensured that the voices of fans and communities were reflected alongside stakeholder evidence in the Board’s decision-making.

4.7 Throughout the consultation on the future of the elite game in Wales, the WRU adopted a structured and transparent approach to communication to ensure stakeholders and the wider public were kept informed as the process progressed. Hosted on the WRU website, a dedicated microsite was created which became the primary home for all materials, blogs and video. This included the publication of a publicly accessible Consultation FAQs document which was updated regularly to address questions raised during the consultation, ensuring clarity and transparency throughout.
(See Annex A – Consultation FAQs.)

4.8 The WRU also provided weekly online updates and blogs, alongside published summaries of consultation meetings with key stakeholders. Together, these measures enabled stakeholders to track engagement activity, understand how feedback was being gathered, and contribute meaningfully to the consultation process.



5. What was Consulted On

5.1 The consultation launched by the Welsh Rugby Union in September 2025 was deliberately broad in scope. It was not confined solely to the number of professional clubs. Instead, it invited stakeholders to engage with the full set of structural, financial and performance challenges facing the men's professional game in Wales, and to consider how those challenges could best be addressed in the long-term interests of Welsh rugby as a whole. At its core, the consultation sought views on:

a.1.8 **The sustainability of the current professional model**

Stakeholders were asked whether the existing four-team structure in the men's game was financially and competitively sustainable, given current and forecast revenues, cost pressures, player welfare considerations and international performance expectations.

a.2.8 **The optimal structure of the men's professional game**

The consultation document set out a range of possible future models, including maintaining four professional teams, reducing to three, or moving to a more radical two-team structure. These models were presented as options for consideration rather than decisions, with stakeholders invited to comment on the relative merits, risks and trade-offs of each.

a.3.8 **Investment levels and concentration of resources**

Participants were asked to consider whether spreading limited resources across four professional teams was delivering sufficient competitive return, or whether concentrating investment into fewer teams could improve performance, resilience and player development outcomes.

a.4.8 **Alignment between professional clubs, pathways and the national game**

The consultation explored how better alignment could be achieved across professional clubs, academies, age-grade rugby and the national teams, including questions of governance, accountability, performance oversight and talent development.

a.5.8 **Impact on player pathways and workforce capacity**

Stakeholders were invited to comment on how different structural options would affect playing opportunities, coaching and professional employment, academy throughput, and the risk of talent loss from Wales.

a.6.8 **Protection of the community game and regional identity**

A central part of the consultation focused on how any changes to the elite game could be implemented while protecting community rugby, maintaining regional identity, and ensuring that rugby continued to serve communities across all parts of Wales.

a.7.8 **Women's rugby and whole-game investment priorities**

Although the consultation focused on the men's professional game, respondents





were asked to consider how structural reform could support wider investment in women's and girls' rugby, coaching, facilities and participation, ensuring benefits flowed through the whole system.

a.8.8 Governance, transparency and trust

Finally, the consultation explicitly invited views on governance arrangements, decision-making transparency, and how confidence and trust in the system could be rebuilt, including how success should be measured and reported over time.

5.2 The consultation document was clear that no decision had been made in advance and that the Board would consider all feedback when evaluating any proposed outcome recommended by the WRU Executive following the consultation. Its purpose was to provide a data-informed framework for dialogue, enabling stakeholders to challenge assumptions, raise concerns, propose alternatives and influence the Board's eventual conclusions. (See Annex B – The Consultation Document)

6. What the Consultation Demonstrated and How It Shaped the Final Decisions

6.1 While consultation evidence was central to shaping the outcome, the Board remained responsible for balancing that evidence against financial risk, governance obligations and long-term sustainability. The consultation produced a substantial and consistent body of evidence from across the Welsh rugby system. While views differed on specific solutions, the consultation demonstrated a number of clear and material conclusions that directly informed the Board's decisions.

6.2 First, there was widespread agreement that the status quo is not sustainable. Across players, clubs, supporters, community representatives and external experts, there was a shared recognition that the existing professional model is not delivering the financial resilience, competitive performance or clarity of direction required for the future. While levels of urgency varied, the proposition that “no change is required” did not command support across any major stakeholder group.

6.3 Second, stakeholders consistently prioritised stability, clarity and alignment over short-term fixes. Respondents emphasised the importance of a system that could be clearly explained, planned around and governed with confidence. There was a strong appetite for reducing uncertainty, particularly around funding, accountability and pathways, even where that meant accepting difficult or uncomfortable change.

6.4 Third, the consultation highlighted strong concern about excessive or abrupt contraction. While many accepted that concentrating investment could improve performance, there was equally strong evidence that a move perceived as too radical or too sudden would risk

damaging player pathways, workforce capacity, regional identity and public confidence. This concern was particularly prominent among players, community stakeholders and supporters.

6.5 Fourth, protection of the community game and pathways was viewed as non-negotiable. Stakeholders were clear that changes to the elite game must not weaken community rugby, volunteer infrastructure, or opportunities for young players across Wales. There was consistent emphasis on maintaining geographic reach, accessible pathways and visible connection between professional rugby and local communities.

6.6 Finally, trust, governance and delivery confidence emerged as central themes.

Beyond structural preferences, the consultation revealed a strong desire for improved governance, clearer accountability and confidence that decisions would be implemented competently and transparently. Many respondents focused less on the precise number of teams and more on whether the WRU could demonstrate control, external assurance and follow-through.

7. How the WRU responded: decisions taken and changes made

7.1 The conclusions drawn from the consultation were formally set out in the WRU's published outcome document, *The Way Forward / YMLAEN*, issued in October 2025. This publication provides a clear statement of the Board's decisions, the evidence that informed them, and how the proposed professional model, investment priorities and pathway reforms are intended to operate as an integrated system for Welsh rugby.

(see Annex C – The Consultation Outcome: *The Way Forward / YMLAEN*.)

7.2 The Board considered the consultation evidence alongside financial modelling, performance analysis and external advice. The final decisions reflect both the strategic objectives of the organisation and clear evidence of where stakeholder feedback altered the direction or shape of reform.

a.1.5 Change in approach to the scale of structural reform

At the outset of the consultation, the WRU presented a range of models including 4, 3 and 2 team solutions. A two-team structure was presented in detail as an optimal model in the consultation document. Feedback demonstrated strong resistance to a reduction of that scale, particularly due to concerns about pathway bottlenecks, loss of professional employment, reduced regional representation and damage to public confidence. In response, the Board moved away from a two-team model and committed instead to a three-team structure. This decision directly reflects consultation evidence that a three-team model better balances the need to concentrate investment with the need to preserve system capacity and national reach.



a.2.5 Retention of system capacity and geographic representation

Consultation feedback highlighted the risks of leaving large parts of Wales without the presence of a professional club. The final decision explicitly takes account of this, preserving broader geographic representation than the more radical options initially tested, and maintaining stronger links between professional rugby, communities and pathways.

a.3.5 Adjustment of the implementation approach

Stakeholders expressed concern not only about the destination, but also about the journey. In response, the WRU has placed greater emphasis on phased implementation, transition planning and mitigation for affected communities and individuals. The Board has been clear that delivery must be controlled, time-limited and aligned with governance reform, rather than rushed or open-ended.

a.4.5 Strengthened emphasis on pathways, women's rugby and the community game

While the consultation focused on the structure of the men's professional game, feedback reinforced the importance of whole-game benefit. As a result, the final programme places explicit and increased emphasis on national academies, talent identification, women's and girls' rugby, coaching development and community investment. These elements are now presented as core components of reform rather than secondary consequences.

a.5.5 Governance and transparency commitments reinforced

The consultation confirmed that confidence in delivery is as important as the structural decision itself. In response, the WRU has strengthened its commitment to transparent reporting, measurable outcomes and independent external scrutiny. The role of the external governance reviewer, and the publication of clear implementation milestones, are direct responses to this feedback.

7.3 The Way Forward therefore represents the point at which consultation evidence was translated into a defined programme of reform, with clear direction on structure, funding, governance and next steps, against which the WRU can be held accountable for delivery.

8. What did not change, and why

8.1 While the WRU listened carefully to consultation feedback, the Board was also required to exercise judgment where evidence pointed to difficult but necessary conclusions. In particular, the consultation did not support maintaining the existing four-team model in its current form. While this option was strongly favoured by some respondents, the financial, performance and risk analysis demonstrated that it would not deliver long-term sustainability without unacceptable levels of risk or continued instability. The Board concluded that retaining an unsustainable model would defer rather than solve the



underlying problems identified through the consultation. The Board therefore decided that a three-team professional model represents a proportionate response to the challenges identified. It balances the need to concentrate investment and talent with the need to preserve system capacity, geographic representation and pathway opportunity.

8.2 During consultation, alternative competition models, including an Anglo-Welsh league, were raised as part of broader discussions about the long-term evolution of the professional game. Contractual arrangements and league structures, both within the URC and elsewhere, means the WRU remains committed to participation in URC as the most effective current competition for Welsh professional rugby. While the WRU recognises that the professional rugby landscape will continue to evolve, the WRU's immediate priority is to strengthen Welsh teams within URC through improved financial resilience and governance, while being open to future opportunities that demonstrably support the long-term interests of Welsh rugby.

8.3 In summary, the consultation materially influenced both the shape and the delivery of reform. It led to a less radical but more resilient structural outcome, a stronger focus on transition and mitigation, and clearer prioritisation of pathways, community rugby and governance assurance. At the same time, the Board has been clear that consultation informs decisions; it does not replace the Board's responsibility to act in the long-term, best interests of Welsh rugby as a whole. The final outcome reflects a balance between listening carefully and acting decisively, based on evidence rather than expediency.

9. Investment priorities and whole-game benefit

9.1 Reform is underpinned by sustained investment across five connected pillars: stronger professional teams; a national academy and talent system; women's and girls' rugby; coaching and workforce development; and the community and heritage game, including Super Rygbi Cymru. These investments are designed to reinforce each other and ensure that change at the elite level strengthens pathways, participation, and national performance rather than diverting resources from the wider game. Further details on the investments can be found in Annex D – One Page investment summary. Taken together, these commitments represent a rebalancing of resources away from short-term firefighting and towards a stable, whole-game investment model that supports participation, performance and community impact over the long term.

9.2 Under the new model, central funding reduces borrowing requirements, improves refinancing terms, and enables proactive debt management. This materially lowers systemic risk while improving long-term viability for all clubs and the wider Welsh rugby system. There will be equal funding for the squads of the three professional teams starting at £6.4M





and rising to £7.8M per annum, or £117m in total. This is in contrast to the projected funding available under the proposed PRA 2025 arrangement where WRU funding to clubs was estimated at £106m FY25-29, i.e. average of £5.3m per club, per year.

9.3 The reformed professional structure makes Welsh professional rugby a more attractive and understandable proposition for private investors. Under the previous system, investment was difficult because ownership was fragmented, debt levels varied between clubs, funding was often short-term, and governance arrangements lacked consistency. This created uncertainty and made it harder for external investors to assess risk.

9.4 The new model provides greater clarity and stability. It involves fewer professional clubs, each with greater scale, more secure funding and a clearer role within the system. A centrally funded baseline reduces the risk of financial failure and lessens the funding dependence on individual owners. Stronger governance, clearer financial reporting, and independent oversight also improve transparency and confidence. The model is designed to support long-term sustainability rather than short-term or speculative investment.

10. Investment in the whole game across Wales

10.1 The WRU is clear that the community game is not subordinate to the professional game. It is fundamental to Welsh rugby's identity, participation base, and volunteer culture. Protecting and strengthening community rugby is therefore a core objective of reform, not a secondary mitigation. Investment in facilities, coaching, refereeing, safeguarding and local clubs is integral to the model and essential to sustaining rugby's presence in towns and villages across Wales.

10.2 As part of this commitment, the WRU has launched a transformative new community club funding model designed to provide greater clarity, fairness and accountability in how funding is allocated across the community game. The model moves away from fragmented or historically based funding towards a more transparent framework that rewards off-field as well as on-field success via an accreditation system and aligns investment with participation, safeguarding, coaching capacity and pathway contribution. Funding decisions will be guided by clear criteria and expected outcomes, ensuring that clubs of different sizes and geographies are supported appropriately while maintaining consistency across Wales. This approach enables the WRU to protect the breadth of the community game, strengthen volunteer and workforce capability, and ensure that investment delivers measurable benefit at a local level, rather than being absorbed by short-term pressures elsewhere in the system.

10.3 The investment programme also includes sustained funding of £500,000 per annum for Super Rygbi Cymru, alongside targeted investment in North Wales. This funding supports participation, player development, coaching capacity and local rugby infrastructure, ensuring

that community clubs remain central to the pathway and to rugby's presence in towns, villages and communities across Wales. Community investment is therefore not a mitigation for professional reform, but a core component of a sustainable, whole-game model. (see annex D – one page investment summary)

10.4 Beyond Super Rygbi Cymru, the investment programme arising from the consultation outcome reflects a deliberate whole-game commitment designed to strengthen community rugby, pathways and participation across Wales. Alongside the £500,000 per annum ring-fenced for Super Rygbi Cymru, boosting our heritage clubs, the WRU is funding a nationally aligned player development system that provides geographic access through a National Academy, two regional delivery locations and twelve Player Development Centres with coverage across Wales. Investment in men's player development rises from £440,000 in the first year to £2.7 million by FY30, ensuring that community clubs remain connected to visible, credible pathways rather than operating in isolation. (see annex D – one page investment summary)

10.5 This impact is reinforced by the creation of a National Talent and Identification Insights Unit serving both the men's and women's games, with investment rising from £1.2 million to £1.5 million by 2030. This capability underpins evidence-led talent identification, coaching development and workforce planning, benefiting community clubs through clearer progression routes, improved coaching quality and better retention of players within Wales. Parallel investment in women's and girls' rugby, increasing from £1.4 million to £2.0 million by 2030, supports a Women's National Academy, an ambition for a new domestic competition and enhanced Celtic Challenge funding, expanding participation opportunities and strengthening the community base of the women's game. (see annex D – one page investment summary)

10.6 Investment in coach education and development further anchors reform at community level, with funding growing from £300,000 to £600,000 by 2030. This supports coaching quality, volunteer retention, and long-term workforce sustainability across the grassroots game. Taken together, these commitments demonstrate that community rugby is not treated as an adjunct to professional reform, but as a central beneficiary of it. The investment programme intentionally links elite reform with sustained funding for pathways, coaching, women's rugby and community infrastructure, ensuring that rugby continues to thrive in towns, villages and communities across Wales while supporting national performance objectives. (see annex D – one page investment summary)



11. Governance Reform, Delivery Confidence and External Assurance

11.1 Structural reform of the professional game is being delivered alongside a wider and deliberate transformation of governance across Welsh rugby. This work was initiated in response to well-documented concerns that emerged in January 2023 about culture, accountability, decision-making clarity and stakeholder confidence within the WRU, and reflects the Board's recognition that sustainable reform of the rugby system cannot be achieved without credible reform of how the organisation is governed.

11.2 In 2023, Dame Anne Rafferty was appointed as an independent external reviewer to provide objective scrutiny of the WRU's governance arrangements, culture and leadership effectiveness. Her role has been to assess whether the organisation has the capability, controls and behaviours required to deliver complex reform responsibly, transparently and in the long-term interests of Welsh rugby.

11.3 The review was not limited to structures on paper. It examined how decisions are taken, how challenge is exercised, how accountability operates between the Board and Executive, and whether the organisation has moved decisively away from historic weaknesses that had undermined trust and confidence. As a result of this governance transformation programme, the WRU has delivered significant and tangible change over the past two years, including:

- a.1.5 Clearer separation of governance and executive responsibility, with strengthened Board oversight, improved decision-making discipline and clearer accountability for delivery.
- a.2.5 Enhanced Board capability and composition, ensuring the skills, independence and experience required to govern a complex national sporting body are in place.
- a.3.5 Improved transparency and reporting, including stronger management information, clearer performance metrics and more structured engagement with stakeholders.
- a.4.5 Strengthened culture and conduct frameworks, reinforcing expected standards of behaviour, challenge and responsibility across the organisation.
- a.5.5 More robust risk management and assurance, enabling the Board to identify, manage and mitigate strategic and operational risks earlier and more effectively.

11.4 These changes have been embedded progressively rather than superficially, with a focus on long-term capability rather than short-term reassurance. Progress against this programme has been subject to ongoing independent external scrutiny. Dame Anne Rafferty has provided consistent assurance that governance capability has materially improved, that the organisation's direction of travel is sound, and that the WRU is better equipped to manage complex change than it was previously.

11.5 This external assurance is a critical safeguard for delivery credibility. It provides confidence that decisions are being taken within a stronger governance framework, that



lessons from the past have been learned, and that the WRU now has the leadership capacity required to see reform through to completion.

12. Impact on Players

12.1 The WRU recognises that recent departures of players from the Welsh domestic game has been influenced by concerns over financial stability and contract security within the professional system. To try and mitigate this risk and protect players during a period of structural reform, the WRU has underwritten player agreements with the professional clubs and has worked with the professional clubs to maintain contract continuity. Where appropriate, this has included jointly agreed arrangements to retain priority players, including the option of centralised playing contracts. The WRU has also put in place safeguards to ensure that players are not disadvantaged by structural outcomes beyond their control, including support to continue their professional careers in Wales where a club is not successful in getting a licence under the new three-team model or if a club ceases to operate. These measures strengthen player protection, reduce uncertainty and directly address one of the key drivers of talent leakage, supporting the stability of the reformed professional model.

13. Conclusion

13.1 Welsh rugby is moving through a necessary period of transition from fragility to sustainability. The WRU believes it is acting with legitimacy, evidence, external assurance and control. While the changes are challenging and emotionally difficult for some, stability and confidence depend on completing the journey rather than disrupting it mid-transition.

13.2 The WRU's focus now moves to implementation, including detailed transition planning, continued engagement with affected stakeholders, and transparent reporting against delivery milestones. Progress will be monitored through strengthened governance arrangements and subject to ongoing independent external assurance.

14. Annexes



Annex A – Consultation FAQs (Pdf)

Annex B – The Consultation Document (Pdf)

Annex C – The Consultation Outcome: The Way Forward / YMLAEN (Pdf)

Annex D – One page investment summary

Summary of funded investment commitments arising from the consultation outcome (*The Way Forward*)

Investment Area	Purpose and System Benefit	Funding Commitment	Delivery Horizon
Three Men's Professional Teams	Concentrates talent, leadership and funding into fewer, stronger teams to improve competitiveness, financial sustainability and alignment with national performance objectives. Centrally funded professional model (funding level aligned to sustainable three-team structure).	There will be equal funding for the three team squads starting at £6.4M and rising to £7.8M per annum.	From transition period through to long-term model
Men's Player Development	Establishes a nationally aligned pathway through a National Academy, two regional delivery locations, 12 Player Development Centres and enhanced age-grade programmes, ensuring geographic access and consistency.	Incremental investment of £440,000 next year to £2.7m by FY30	FY27–FY30
National Talent & Identification Insights Unit (Men & Women)	Creates central capability for talent identification, performance tracking, workforce development and data infrastructure to support evidence-led decision-making across the system.	Investment of £1.2m in Year 1, rising to £1.5m by 2030	FY27–2030

Women's Player Development	Delivers a step-change in the women's game through a Women's National Academy, a new domestic league and enhanced funding for the Celtic Challenge, supporting participation and elite performance.	Incremental investment of £1.4m in Year 1, rising to £2.0m by 2030	FY27–2030
Coach Education & Development	Builds a comprehensive coaching development framework from community to international level, improving quality, retention and progression across the rugby workforce.	Incremental investment of £300,000 in Year 1, rising to £600,000 by 2030	FY27–2030
Super Rygbi Cymru	Provides sustained support to Super Rygbi Cymru, boosting heritage clubs, including targeted investment in North Wales, strengthening participation, pathways and community rugby infrastructure.	Incremental investment of £500,000 per annum to strengthen our community and heritage clubs	Ongoing
Community & Grassroots Rugby (Whole-Game Impact)	Supports facilities, safeguarding, refereeing, coaching and volunteer infrastructure to sustain rugby's presence across towns and villages in Wales.	Integrated within whole-game investment framework	Ongoing

[\[1\]](#) CVC Capital Partners entered into a strategic partnership with Six Nations Rugby Limited and United Rugby Championship (URC) Limited in 2021, acquiring minority equity stakes in both competitions. In return, participating unions, including the Welsh Rugby Union, received upfront capital payments. While these transactions provided immediate cash receipts, they also resulted in a permanent reduction in future annual revenues from the Six Nations and URC. In the years following the transactions, a proportion of the upfront capital receipts were used across the system to support ongoing operating costs. As a result, the underlying reduction in recurring income was partially masked in the short term and required subsequent adjustment to ensure long-term financial sustainability.