

Annual Review 2017/18

Responses to questions and comments



We thank all our members who have submitted questions and points of accuracy regarding the Draft Annual Review 2017/18. Our responses are detailed below. Some similar questions have been grouped together to avoid repetition. The final version of the Annual Review is available on our website and printed copies will be available for collection at the AGM on July 7 and sent out by post thereafter to Company Members and PremierClubs, and to others upon request.

From: Maureen Hazell of Blades TTC, Crawley & Horsham TTL and Sussex County TTA

Page 3

Are we yet fit for purpose?

Table Tennis England is compliant with the Government's Code for Sports Governance and the future implementation of the recommendations of the recent Governance Review will continue to transform the association.

From: Maureen Hazell

Page 4

Empty stadiums for the Nationals is not a very inclusive or a good use of a great venue.

The CopperBox Arena was full for the ITTF Team World Cup, proving that there is an audience for international standard table tennis. Unfortunately the same audience does not yet exist for the National Championships and we are therefore looking to return to smaller venues.

From: Maureen Hazell

Page 4

Performance may be improving but we don't yet have consistent standards for player behaviours at big tournaments.

We would also like to see consistently good standards of player behaviour. Umpires and referees do their best to enforce the rules of the game consistently, and coaches and parents also have a role to play, but unfortunately this cannot always guarantee good player behaviour.

From: Maureen Hazell

Page 4

Unelected volunteers for positions like Regional Chairs shows a lack of respect to the regions that they are supposed to represent. TTE should not force their choice of personnel on counties and ignore concerns raised in that regard.



We are looking to return to smaller venues for the PG Mutual National Championships

Regional committees are encouraged to identify a Chairman to sit on the Regional Forum. Personal differences can and should be settled by the Regional Committee themselves.

From: Diane Webb, ETTA Vice-President, Chairman of Archives, Records and Museums Committee, Hastings & DTTA Company Member

Page 5

The CEO's report states that "every member had the opportunity to 'have a voice'". Could I ask how people without an email address were consulted and how such an opportunity was made available to them?

Counties, Clubs and Leagues could make the consultation known to their members and submit comments on their behalf. The consultation was completely open and not restricted to certain functions such as National Council. More than 500 individuals engaged with the consultation process, which is a high response rate for this type of survey.

From: Maureen Hazell

Page 6

ESTTA merger is already showing signs of moving away from the inclusive nature of schools to an

Elite approach as has always been favoured by TTE choosing the same EYS children again and again.

The ESTTA merger and schools competitions have no connection to the EYS selections. EYS selections are based on transparent criteria.

Schools events are selected by a different panel from the EYS and other domestic events, under a different policy and with different objectives and considerations.

From: Maureen Hazell

Page 6

Brighton TTC is often featured and their diversity should be applauded how fair is the allocation of TTE funds?

Brighton TTC is a fantastic example of an inclusive and forward-thinking club making a big difference to its community. It has been visited by senior representatives of Sport England who have provided it with some direct funding. It has also been visited by the ITTF Foundation Director recently, who follows with interest the work of the Club. Table Tennis England has not provided any funding to Brighton TTC since a capital award in 2015/16.

From: Diane Webb

Page 8

Decrease in Player Members is disappointing and from four years ago the numbers are down. Despite all the investment in various projects it would appear that they have made no impact on regular playing. With the BeTT project shorter format leagues are being given funding and yet members of these leagues do not have to be TTE Player Members. Why not? This is against the Rules of the Association. Why is this allowed to happen? Is it right that those who make no financial contributions receive financial benefits?

A stipulation of the funding being provided to Be TT projects is that they register participants as Table Tennis England player members.

For any junior leagues being established (outside of a local league structure) we are expecting them over the course of 12 months to ensure all participants are Table Tennis England player members.



We are providing Ping! participants with opportunities to play in other locations and ultimately go on to become Player Members

For any new adult or mixed shorter format leagues being established outside of the local league structure (i.e. a club setting one up) we again require these leagues to work towards all players becoming Table Tennis England members.

When working with local leagues, we would expect them to follow their own rules. If we were working with Wellingborough league, for example to introduce a two-man league into the bottom division of their league, or a new Junior League, we would expect them to still ensure players taking part were Table Tennis England members, as their current rules outline.

The reason why in some cases we have allowed a period of time for some shorter-format leagues to convert to full Player Members is because many will have to go through a trial period to achieve the numbers and right set-up they are looking for.

We will continue to gain feedback from the players, clubs and leagues as we move forward with these projects.

From: Estyn Williams, National Councillor for Warwickshire

Pages 8-10

The report details some commendable mass participation projects which have given a very large number of participants a taste of the sport. Yet the number of player members is slightly down on the previous year. Will the Board consider developing a comprehensive strategy to increase participation and membership, including ways which encourage players to progress from one to the other?

From: Diane Webb

Pages 8-10

Mass participation has a figure of around 805,000 participants but with Player Members numbers down this enormous potential is not being captured. How is this being addressed?

The 805,000 figure quoted refers to those who engaged with our game through the 2017 Ping! festival. Our insight tells us that a large percentage of participants taking part in Ping! are playing for the first time in many years and therefore trying to convert these people into Player Members can be a long and complex process.

This isn't necessarily the route they wish to take either and therefore much of the work that the Mass Market department does focuses on developing a broader range of opportunities for people so they can continue to take part and enjoy our game in a way that they want to, after the Ping! festival has finished.

The long-term vision is for Table Tennis England to be able to offer added value to everybody who wants to consume and be involved in our sport through a range of different offers and associated membership categories. This will take time to develop and get right, however.

The Be TT programme in its first year has been focused on improving the experience for participants and ensuring we have the right table tennis offer for different types of participants already involved in the game, or who may make contact with our clubs or leagues to start playing. It is about ensuring participants in the sport already are retained in the sport and come back year after year, but might mean as their lifestyle changes they access different parts of the wider table tennis offer.

For example, instead of losing a participant when they

have a family and the late league nights on different nights each week become difficult, instead they may now be able to access an individual or two-man league run by their local club, which keeps them in the sport. We hope that having these offers in place enables an easier transition from social and recreational play to club and league play and Table Tennis England membership.

We have seen member retention increase this year from 81% to 83% and programmes are being introduced in the second year of Be TT to engage new participants and ensure we look to increase membership across the board over the next 2-3 years. These programmes include:

- Bat and Chat – aimed at people aged 55+ and focused on attracting new participants into the sport, but also will be an important offer for people already playing, enabling them to improve their table tennis experience (social session, could be some coaching) and enable them to play more regularly.

- Back to TT – this programme will be launched in the 2018/19 season and do exactly as it says on the tin, looking to bring adults back to the sport that may have played in a league/club/youth club, 5-40 years ago.

- Youth Product – we are in the early stages of developing a programme that will look at how we market to and attract more 7-11 year olds into the sport. We have been informing people about this programme at the roadshows up and down the country and are happy to run though in person or over the phone what this programme is likely to look like.

Ping Pong Parlours also act as a stepping stone into more regular participation and provide a platform for clubs to recruit new members, such as the partnership between Wensum TTC, Norwich City TTC and the Parlour in Norwich, highlighted on p10 of the Review.

From: Estyn Williams

Pages 8-13

We are now 3 years into Mission 2025, our 10 year plan for the sport. Which of the targets in Mission 2025 have we already achieved or are on schedule to achieve? Which will not be achieved at the current rate of progress and do the Board have remedial plans for those?

The Board and Senior Leadership Team are undertaking a review of Mission 2025 and will be refocusing on a 3-4 year plan in the coming months.

The change in Sport England strategy allows us to focus more on grassroots development and volunteering than was the case previously. Likewise, with Birmingham 2022 now on the horizon a review of the opportunities this provides needs to be factored in.

The strategic priorities in the coming year include women and girls, youth, event volunteering and officiating as well as the ongoing BeTT programme.

Key milestones reached in the last 12 months include the ESTTA merger, the launch of BeTT, rewrite of L1 coaching qualifications, the staging of a major event (Team World Cup), free to air broadcast on BBC online and connected TV and Commonwealth Games success. A full update will be provided every two years.

From: Estyn Williams

Page 8

The Review says our strategy is one of retention and providing better experiences for the members, rather than a sole focus on growth. This seems to imply a relatively low priority for



The ITTF Team World Cup – hosting a major international event was one of the Mission 2025 targets. The Board are currently reviewing Mission 2025 and updates will continue to be provided

recruitment. As player membership reduced last year should the Board consider giving higher priority to recruitment and growth?

With a change in strategy from Sport England it was identified that retention of existing members and reducing churn was an area that had taken less priority in recent years when the strategy had been driven by participation growth in particular. Within the Sport England 'behaviour change model' it is possible to see that with small changes, retaining people who already have a playing habit has a quicker return than bringing people through the transition from inactive or low activity into regular activity. However, it is still very much a priority to grow participation as well as membership and that goes hand in hand with the BeTT programme to support club and leagues to overcome barriers in both retention and growth.

The priority has been to listen to our player members about what would help them have a better experience in the sport and therefore retain them in the sport for longer. The Be TT programme also focuses on making sure we are offering the right experiences when someone new comes into the sport and the two areas above often work hand in hand. For example, the move to generate more shorter format league opportunities is not only something that our members have told us they are keen to see, but also something we know will help to engage and retain more new people to the sport when they are looking for their first competitive experiences (young and older).

A number of new programmes aimed at growth include Bat and Chat and the Youth Product that is under current development. Currently with player membership (and player licenses) only being focussed on affiliated league and national level players, growth in that area will be a combination of new formats of leagues and interventions based on insight where there is drop off. Programmes such as Bat and Chat or club based or unaffiliated summer leagues will not show in a growth of player membership for this reason even though we know they are improving participation.

A review of the membership structure will be undertaken in the coming year as the current structure does not give us a full picture of the health of the regular playing community.

From: Peter Cruwys

Page 9

Can you supply info on this schools strategy? We have 2 young coaches who we want to go round local schools in Cheltenham area, who have 6 to 12 tables, but no Teacher Qualified coaches, and no after school clubs.

The Schools Strategy, which is under development, will focus on several different aspects to enable table tennis to gain more traction with teachers and schools, but also provide more support and guidance for clubs and coaches to engage more and feel more confident when working with schools.

Part of this work will be aiming to increase the number of teacher courses delivered in schools throughout the country, following the newly developed course about 12 months ago.

We are also in the process of developing a youth programme, which will have the link between clubs and schools at the heart of it, providing coaches with the tools, marketable resources and session plans to deliver a set programme of table tennis activity in the school environment. We believe this will help clubs to be able to engage in better conversations with schools and look at how we can utilise some of the Sports Premium funding that schools have available to them.

Schools table tennis is a massive priority for Table Tennis England and the priority with our schools strategy will be to focus on engagement at primary school level. However, we do also have our Satellite Club programme, which is focused on participation from 11 years of age and can include secondary school-based delivery. Please see the link below for more information about the funding opportunities available.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/clubs/clubs-guidance/satellite-clubs/>

From: Diane Webb

Page 12

There were some excellent England performances on the international stage throughout the year and those players should be congratulated. However, England Women's team finished in the lowest position ever at a World Championships and the Men's team finished in the lowest position ever at a European Championships. With the significant increase in staffing in the Performance Department why were these results so poor?

Thank you for highlighting some of the wonderful performances from the England teams and you are correct to note that there were also some significant disappointments in outcome terms. However, the outcomes as ever are only one view.

The European Team Championships regulations had changed and as such there was no opportunity for promotion from the Challenge Division. The performance team took the decision to take a developmental view of this event and as such discussed with Paul Drinkhall and Liam Pitchford stepping aside for this event.

A younger team of men took to the stage and unfortunately Sam Walker and David McBeath were unable to replicate some of their more recent form and thus, despite some strong performances from Tom and Helshan, the men did not deliver what they were capable of and the standard of result the team had been aiming for. This said, there was some great learning and Sam was able to take on board the comments and performed to a much higher level at the Polish Open just a few short weeks later.

The Women's team were depleted by the recent retirement of Kelly Sibley and by Charlotte Bardsley being unavailable because of academic demands. This meant that three players only were selected to the team and as such, despite some positive performances from Denise

and great wins from Tin-Tin they, were not able to secure a top half of the group result.

At this point the three players had been through a long spring of major events, World Cup, two European Team Championships matches, the Commonwealth Games and finally the World Team Championships. Maintaining performances across all of these events, plus other international competitions, is always a challenge given the limitations of the support available and despite the comment about significant increases in staffing, this is not the case. An additional coach has been brought in on a limited contract, approximately 20 days this year and 50 last year, to support the programme. This is the only additional resource that the department has had this year.

From: Diane Webb

Page 13

The list of Senior Internationals has Charlotte Bardsley amongst the names. I was not aware she had participated at senior level. Could you confirm at which event/s she played? Being a reserve does not constitute a senior cap.

Charlotte was part of the Senior squad for the ITTF Team World Cup in London although, as you rightly say, she did not make an appearance and therefore did not receive any caps. The list in the Annual Review is not solely a list of caps but also reflects those who are chosen in England squads for major events. Given the important contribution made by those athletes – on this occasion Charlotte – in the practice hall and on the bench, not to mention the sacrifices they make to achieve that level, we feel it is important to recognise the fact that they are still representing their country, regardless of whether they play any matches.

From: Diane Webb

Pages 28-30

A couple of financial questions that arose at our Hastings & DTTA Executive meeting a) What was the total staffing bill for 2017/18? b) What was the loss at this year's Senior National Championships?

a) £1,561,137.

b) the Senior Nationals this year had a total deficit of £36,669, comprising £15,707 production costs and an event deficit of £20,962.



Charlotte Bardsley (centre) on the England bench at the ITTF Team World Cup

From: Martin Clark, National Councillor for Worcestershire

Pages 28-30

Whilst the new funding cycle may have different priorities, such changes are commonplace within organisations and businesses. It cannot be difficult to identify such changes that affect prior years and make prior year adjustments to enable recipients to relate performance between years.

Nevertheless, it is assumed that forecasting in the current year will be made on the same principle that the year-end accounts are produced which bearing in mind that the latest forecast produced to National council in April (after the year-end) shows remarkable variances with the figures in the Annual Report.

	Forecast	Annual
Other Income	154,100	53,469
Ratings & Tournament Levies	37,000	49,832
Other Core Costs	467,388	313,211
MASS	454,861	503,883
Performance	74,042	(8,306)

Why then is there such a wide variance bearing in mind that the management figures are subject to rigorous examination by the Board and Sport England? Does this imply that the Management figures released to National council are inaccurate? Delivery of interim accounts in the same format as the annual accounts would be far more informative than those presently delivered.

The information provided to National Council was accurate, the variances relate to internal department transfers between Operations and Mass and Performance around contribution to back office costs and performance delivery.

Ranking and tournament levies: There was an original prudent budget of £37,000 set, but as the report provided at National Council shows we had already received more than this. Other income in the National Council report included other grants, which is detailed separately in the year-end accounts.

From: Martin Clark

Pages 28-30

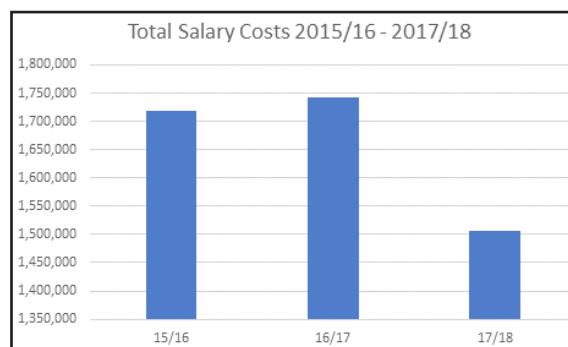
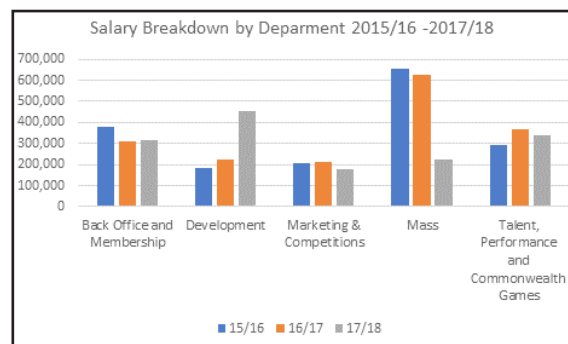
There have been a number of senior staff that left earlier in the year that have not been replaced, so why is it that staffing costs have increased from last year?

Staffing costs have not increased from last year, the figures in staffing costs represent one part of the organisation. Trends in staffing costs both organisationally and by department are detailed below:

General comments/questions

From: Diane Webb

The presentation of the Annual Review is again good although I did find the lack of sub-headings



in several sections made it rather unwieldy to read at times and not possible to home in on specific areas. I would like to compliment Paul Stimpson on all his excellent coverage and reports throughout the year.

From: Diane Webb

There are several omissions from the Review which I feel are important and have been included previously year on year. The major area is lack of committee reports. I have always found these interesting and valuable recognising the work carried out by volunteers at national level. There is now no way to know what committees do as minutes of meetings are no longer available.

As the Chairman of the Archive, Records and Museums Committee I find this disturbing as there is no record for future generations, they are part of our history and need to be preserved, it also shows respect to those who work at this level. Please can these be included in future. Other areas not covered: Facilities, Mission 2025 update, TDCs and unless I have missed them Board and National Council sections.

Committee minutes should be sent to Head Office and are retained as a record of committee activity.

From: Diane Webb

I would be interested to know how England voted at in respect of reducing the number of teams at the World Championships.

This was not an ITTF AGM decision so England did not have a vote. It was a decision of the Board of Directors.

In addition to the above, a small number of inquiries were received relating to the design of the Annual Review, or pointing out minor omissions or typographical errors. These were responded to individually and corrections made where necessary.