

National Council Meeting

July 2015

Tony Catt was appointed to chair this meeting. It was a shortened meeting as it was before the TTE AGM.

Because the AGM was following the National Council meeting, the meeting was set out in Theatre style rows of chairs rather than providing tables. This was very unpopular with National Council members

Tony Catt reported back to the meeting the findings of the working group that met in May to review the running of the National Council meetings, following the re-structure of TTE in April 2014. The group had discussed how meetings had run during the year and any changes that were required.

The most important points that came forward from that meeting were:

- The standing orders were reviewed.
- National Council Guidance Notes were reviewed
- Communication with the board needed to be improved. NC wanted to see board minutes and to be able to feedback to board, preferably before the board committed to new courses of action.
- The financial information provided at meeting should have a summary to give members a concise piece of information that would be understandable for all those that struggle with the detail of accounts.
- Reports produced for the meeting would be classified as
 - For information
 - For consideration
 - For Endorsement
- A chair should be elected for a term, probably one season rather than rotating as people found themselves less able to address their points to a caretaker chair.
- Members would like a summary of the meeting produced for them to circulate to their county members.

These were put out for consultation and also referred back to the board.

- The board has agreed to have an agenda item for matters being raised from National Council.
- The scheduling of board meetings has been changed to give time to be referred back to National Council meetings and vice versa.
- The board was not happy with the word endorsement as the National Council cannot overturn board decisions and requested that an alternative word was considered.
- Some feedback was received regarding the wording of the standard orders and guidance notes.

At the National Council meeting, some more points were raised about the wordings and it was agreed that Jonathan Bruck would liaise with Ron Washington to fine tune the documents for further publishing. This is to be done over the next couple of weeks, if at all possible.

The word endorsement was discussed and it was thought that it is the most accurate word, although further consideration of this will be undertaken in future reviews.

It was agreed that Martin Clark would liaise with Keith Thomas and Jonathan Bruck to get the financial information produced in an understandable format for the NC members in future. This is good news that the accounts professionals are working together to get a good product in the future.

It was agreed that nomination forms for the Chair for the coming season would be distributed for collection in the meeting for the result to be published later in the meeting. It was also agreed that a formal process should be put in place for future elections.

Phil Goulding questioned the wording regarding the production of paper copies for people who did not want to print their own copies of all the papers that are distributed electronically in preparation for meetings. Estyn Williams said that this would be a considerable expense to TTE, prevent much needed funding reaching the frontline of the sport and should therefore be discouraged.

Various reports from the Chief Executive Officer, Chair of TTE, Operations and Finance, Marketing, Development and Performance were discussed.

Sara Sutcliffe brought us up to date with the current thinking of Sport England and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. The new government is looking to address sport participation as a cross-departmental issue. Thus the current strategy is being 'ripped up' by the new minister and a green paper will be published shortly for consultation. It is felt that this will lead to a longer term view and the plans should be more robust as sport is being considered on a more holistic basis as a health and welfare issue as well as aiming for excellence on the international stage.

Sandra Deaton thanked everybody for their support in the recent election.

Sandra also spoke about the new facilities money that TTE has available for the purchase or upgrading of equipment and premises for clubs.

There was quite a discussion about the associate members qualifying for the third party and public liability insurance without paying a fee.

The rationale for this was to level the playing field for premier clubs (who currently pay) and others who do not.

Also it will be the membership numbers of TTE. The benefits of this are twofold:

- Increase the numbers to show to Sport England for future funding.
- Enable TTE to contact people who are currently not on their database. This contact would be hoped to increase the likelihood of encouraging these people to upgrade their membership and buy TTE products and services.

In the AGM it was pointed out that the income from associate members is currently around £6,500, which would be lost. However, it is thought that the long term benefits would far outweigh this short term loss.

The fee level would be reviewed annually alongside all other grades of membership. There is a working party currently reviewing different levels of membership for the future.

There was also some concern that no women's team was sent to the recent World Championships.

Simon Mills answered that TTE would only send people to events if they felt that the represents were likely to be able to win some matches and benefit from the event. There was no point in sending lambs to a slaughter. The women would continue to be sent to events where they could develop in order to qualify for selection to major tournaments.

As we only had 2 hours, the agenda was intentionally shorter than usual.

At the end of the meeting, the result of the election of chair was published. The numbers were as follows.

Tony Catt	12
Karen Tonge	9
Estyn Williams	1

Thus Tony Catt shall be the National Council chair for the 2015/6 season.

Annual General Meeting

Sandra Deaton started the meeting thanking people for their support in the recent election for chair. Sandra paid tribute to Andy Seward for starting the process of change that she is now able to continue with her own mandate.

Susie Hughes then presented the TTE Annual Report to the meeting and went through it for accuracy and comment.

The main topics that were discussed at any length were the issues regarding the fees for associate members and the representative teams at major events. There were some interestingly diverse points of discussion raised on each of these issues.

It was pointed out that the income from associate members is currently around £6,500, which would be lost. However, it is thought that the long term benefits would far outweigh this short term loss.

The Zero rate associate membership fee for the coming season as well as the current £10 for seniors and £5 for juniors were accepted at the meeting by a considerable majority.

Denis Neale made an impassioned speech about the previous level of success for English players on the international and the current lack of success. He made the point that our players need to be taught how to win and that they should be able to be successful to achieve selection.

There were various awards of life membership, vice presidents and other honours presented at the meeting.

My personal highlight was the acceptance speech of Will Bailey. He was obviously delighted to receive his award and had an infectious enthusiasm and wit. It is easy to see why he is successful.

If you would like to discuss any of the issues raised, please call me on 07899 847338.

Tony Catt
National Councillor, Sussex