

## **April National Council Meeting**

**3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017**

I missed the January meeting, but one of the upshots of that meeting was that a steering group was put in place to look at how the National council should run in line with the Code of Governance being introduced by Sport England on behalf of the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS).

The members of the steering group are Martin Clark, Chris Dangerfield, Neil Hurford, Alan Ransome, Karen Tonge, Estyn Williams and me. The group met on 11<sup>th</sup> March at Estyn's house, although Neil and Karen were unable to attend.

From this meeting, I produced a report to take forward. After a lot of emails and re-writes, the eventual report that was published was version 8.

The steering group then met again on the morning of our NC meeting to discuss how we should proceed and reached the following conclusions.

- As a group we were not happy with the Sport England code of governance. There is the danger of a loss of democracy.
- The term limits for service tenure would mean that a lot of knowledge and experience would be lost.
- Appointed directors should be on the Nominations Committee of the board for the selection of future board members.
- Appendix to document shows that the definition of council should not be applicable.
- Members will get to vote on this at the AGM.
- We need to work with the board to find workable compromises.
- There are compromises that can be made without losing Sport England funding.

We need to look at how we can encourage volunteers participating on a national level. To grow the volunteer network.

We also need to look at how the National council can be made more effective. The definition of effective may be different between the members of the steering group. Also perhaps to produce a description of the roles of NCs between the counties, regions and national fora.

### **Pre-meeting**

The pre-meeting took place to discuss the steering group paper. At this meeting, there was agreement that the paper would be put forward. Also the steering group was given authority to take the negotiations forward on behalf of the members of National Council.

### **Main Meeting**

A minute's silence was held for the following people who had died since the last meeting.

Derek Tyler, Brian Savage, Jim West, Pat Glynn

### **Conflicts of Interest**

As well as Chris Dangerfield of TT365, it was noted that the staff had conflicts of interest about the discussions in the meeting

## Departmental Reports

These were presented as appendices to the reports of Sandra Deaton and Sara Sutcliffe.

It was suggested that the progress of the Mission 2025 should be included in the annual report. It would also be helpful if this could be made public for discussion at NC meetings.

The minutes from Board meetings have not been put onto the TTE website since June 2016. This is to be brought up to date.

TTE is bringing in new database systems for clubs and also for Loop! and Ping! users to enable better transmission of information and functionality for those facilities. Also a new system is being brought in to enable start to end organisation of tournaments. This will enable online entry and payment, as well as live information throughout the tournament and updating the ranking system without the need for multiple entry of information.

There are now around 600 coaches on the register. This is a significant increase from previous figures, brought about by changing the CPD requirements. There is still some concern about the number of places available on coaching courses, but this is being addressed.

The National Championships had been broadcast as a digital stream on Sport Bible via Facebook. It seems that there were 3.4m individual views. There was some doubt whether a view of 3 seconds or 30 seconds was counted as an individual view. The views are counted as individual IP addresses, so it is not possible to know whether the viewers were in the UK or worldwide. There was also a broadcast on Sky Mix. The point was made that digital streaming appealed to the preferred audience, being younger people. Also 3.4m was a much larger figure than would have been achieved on mainstream television and certainly more than Sky and paid for services.

Martin Ireland made a presentation of the new clubs and leagues support program. This will provide support for clubs and leagues to assist with funding applications and general support. There were some concerns raised about the capacity within TTE to handle this in view of the recent job losses. The scheme needs interested parties to apply by 31<sup>st</sup> May.

Mark Taffler introduced a discussion of a possible website forum for National Councillors to ask questions that arise between meetings. This would enable more detailed answers to be provided and for general discussion. There are various methods that this can be done – closed portal, closed Facebook group or Google Forum or even open groups available to all members. Mark is to look into this and report back.

The main issue of discussion was the application of the Governance code to National Council. The only outstanding issue that needs to be agreed at the AGM to secure the next tranche of funding from Sport England is the Appointment of the Chair. TTE has said that if the Chair is appointed, the Deputy Chair will come from the member elected directors. The member elected directors are already on the Nominations committee, so this would represent no change. There was some discussion about the titles of the member elected directors.

It was agreed that the Steering Group would meet TTE on 11<sup>th</sup> May to take this matter further and shall report back in due course.

## **Discussion Groups**

There were 4 discussion groups set for the afternoon.

The topics were as follows.

- The Governance requirements state that it is a requirement to have a minimum 30% of female representation on the Board and a general expectation that this principle is introduced through all levels of administration in the organisation. How can table tennis support this principle.
- What are the different kinds of volunteers that can be engaged i.e. club mentors, coach mentors and what can we do more to diversify our that the next generation of volunteers are coming through the system?
- How can the current volunteer structure look at succession planning to ensure e structure a barrier to growing the sport?
- What role has leagues in developing the sport?

The findings from each of the groups will be summarised in a separate document over the next few days. This should include any action plans that TTE intends to take forward. I got the impression that the only discussion that was really active was the one about leagues, which confirms my findings from having put the questions up on Facebook previously.

## **Any Other Business**

A vote was held concerning the date of the July meeting. Following the vote, it was passed that the meeting will be at 9.30am on 8<sup>th</sup> July before the conference and annual general meeting. The agenda for that shortened meeting will be as follows.

- This meeting would be for NCs only.
- Report back from Steering Group regarding Governance Code
- The dates of future National Council meetings should be set for the following season.
- Elect the Chair for meetings for the following season.
- Discussion about future of National council.

As the meeting will be so short, there will not be time for discussion of any reports from CEO, Chair and departments. The staff of TTE and the board will not be at the meeting as they will be preparing for the conference and annual general meeting.

The meeting ended at 3.30pm.

## **Disclaimer**

**I would remind any readers of this document, that it represents my view of the meeting. It is not the minutes of the meeting. These will be produced shortly by TTE. Therefore, the points made will not require any correction. I would also make the point that the views expressed in this report I my own and do not represent in any way the views that may be held within TTE.**

**Tony Catt  
Chair, National Council**