

MAG – Update Note for National Council

The Formation of MAG

The formation of a Members Advisory Group (MAG) was the main recommendation of the Independent Review Panel on Governance.

MAG has been established as a source of strategic and operational advice to the Board on a broad range of issues relating to table tennis. The advice that MAG provides to the Board is based in part on the knowledge and expertise of the individual Members. However, this advice also draws on input from the wider table tennis community or reflects the views of the table tennis community.

Appointment of Members of MAG

Members of MAG were appointed through an open transparent application process.

The 12 inaugural MAG members appointed are: Craig Bryant, Kevin Buddell, Joanne Green, Neil Hurford, Brian Kean, David Maddison, Dean Nabarro, Sandy Nash, Raj Patel, Steve Pratt, Stuart Sherlock and Dan Simms.

Members of MAG come from all parts of the table tennis community – including players, clubs, leagues & counties, coaches, umpires, schools.

Sadly, Brian Kean has recently had to step down from MAG due to ill health.

MAG Activities – A Project-Based Approach

MAG has met three times since its formation, with Susie Hughes acting as facilitator.

The first meeting was primarily to facilitate introductions and to set some working parameters. The Group decided to adopt a project-based approach. The second meeting started setting the groundwork for the operation of the Group and discussed both the first and subsequent projects. The third meeting set out a broad agenda of issues to be addressed.

At the third meeting, MAG appointed its first Chairman – Neil Hurford. Susie Hughes continues to attend MAG meetings to ensure that the work programme of MAG closely aligns with Board priorities and timescales.

Current Projects

- **Ranking/Rating** – MAG was asked by the Board to look at the principles against which any future system should be measured and to provide feedback to the Board on what does and what doesn't work well about the current TTE system. Comments on various aspects of the ranking system were fed back to the National Rankings Working Group.
- **Coaching** - recognising the importance of coaching/coaches, we have initially identified a wide range of key issues related to improving the coaching system in table tennis in England. The aim was to seek feedback from the Board on priorities. The Board has asked MAG to address

two topics in the first instance, namely a) women and ethnic minorities in coaching; and b) drop-off rate of coaches

- **Volunteering** - it is widely recognised that volunteers are a key resource for our sport. It is essential that volunteers feel valued, supported and proud to volunteer across all aspects of the sport. This project will address three main areas, namely: (a) best practice for the creation of a volunteers' network; (b) examples of ways to enhance the volunteers experience; (c) how to encourage and retain local volunteers. An underlying theme will be to explore how to ensure an increase in the number of volunteers from ethnic minorities, women and young volunteers.
- **IT Systems** - TTE has recently launched two new IT systems – TT Memberships and TT Leagues. It should be possible to develop these two systems further so that they fundamentally change the way the players, clubs and leagues interact with TTE by providing a single interface for a range of transactions. MAG has proposed to establish a working group to undertake a project that would investigate these issues and make recommendations. This project would need to involve representation from across the table tennis community – National Council, MAG, Board, and Staff.
- **Building the Consultative Network** – for MAG to be effective, it needs to have deep roots in the various constituencies of the table tennis community – leagues, counties, coaches, umpires, schools etc. Setting up such consultative networks is essential but challenging. In the first instance, we are exploring how we can work with existing structures to link them into MAG
- **Changing Perceptions/Profile** - the perception of table tennis in the UK is probably the biggest reason for its lack of growth. Accordingly, this project is aimed at making changing the perception of table tennis in the UK a genuine priority and put together a long-term strategy to solve the issue. In the first instance, MAG member Dean Nabarro who has a strong background in the media industry will make a presentation to the Board at its next meeting in January with a view to agreeing the key first steps.

Active Engagement with the Table Tennis Community

Underpinning all the activities of MAG is the recognition that active engagement with the table tennis community will determine the long-term success of MAG. Close collaboration with National Council is an essential part of that process.

Neil Hurford

Chairman

Members Advisory Group

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