

NATIONAL COUNCIL - MINUTES



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NATIONAL COUNCIL - MINUTES

Minutes of the National Council Meeting held at Kents Hill Park Training and Conference Centre, Swallow House, Timbold Drive, Kents Hill Park, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK7 6BZ, on Saturday 9th February 2019 at 11.00 am.

ATTENDEES:

CHAIR: C Dangerfield (Shropshire)

COUNCILLORS: DL Hockney (Avon), A Murdoch (Bedfordshire), S Hayes (Buckinghamshire), B Freer (Cambridge), K Tonge MBE (Cheshire), AE Ransome OBE (Cleveland), DM Jermyn (Cornwall), J Cowell (Derbyshire), A Thompson (Durham), P Ashleigh (Essex), DB Turner (Hampshire), H Jutle (Herefordshire), DJ Edwards (Hertfordshire), G Rushton (Lancashire), M Allsop (Nottingham), N Hurford (Oxfordshire), C Dangerfield (Shropshire), J Kenny (South Yorkshire), C Bell (Staffordshire), B Davison (Suffolk), E J Williams (Warwickshire), CN Sewell (Wiltshire), MG Clark (Worcestershire), RB Hudson (Yorkshire),

DEPUTY COUNCILLORS: R Jackson (Cheshire), J Skinner (Sussex),

STAFF: S Sutcliffe (TTE CEO)

REGIONAL CHAIRS: B Davison (East), K Tonge MBE (North West), DB Turner (South)

INVITED: S Deaton (TTE Chair), S Hughes (Deputy Chair), K Thomas (Treasurer, BTTA), D Livingstone (Director), T Purcell (Director), A Gabb (Minute taker)

REGISTERED BUSINESS INTERESTS: C Dangerfield (Shropshire)

APOLOGIES: M Mitcham (Berkshire), R Lindner (Dorset), P Hadley (Deputy NC Dorset), L Smith (Gloucestershire), D Adamson (Deputy NC Gloucestershire), M Dove (Isle of Wight), N Le Millier (Kent), A Millman (Devonshire), G Tyler (Lincolnshire), T Dias (Middlesex), T Vincent (Norfolk), G Pearson (Northumberland), I Hooper (Somerset), R Loxley (South Yorkshire), M Fraser (Surrey), T Catt (Sussex), M Smith (Director), Simon Griew (Director), Jan Johns (VETTS)

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1. INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR & A MINUTES SILENCE

- 1.1 Chris Dangerfield – Chair (CD) welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 11am.
- 1.2 CD explained that digital recordings of the meeting will be made in order to ensure accuracy of minutes. CD said that if anybody else would like to make their own recordings, they will need to declare this and approval will be needed.
- 1.3 CD said that Diane Webb and Margot Fraser have provided a list of obituaries for the minutes silence, which was held for the following people who were associated to table tennis:

Derek Tremayne
Alan Sheppard
Cyril Villas
John Heaton
Les Grasswell
Margaret Fry
John Wilde
Gordon Sanders
Colin Henderson
Harry Ross
Nick Beattie
Peter Wales
Brian Roddis
Paul Buttle

- 1.4 CD summarised an email which was sent out by Sandra Deaton, distributed to National Councillor (NC), explaining that the Board have decided to fund 2 National Council meetings per year going forward. The decision was also made to remove the requirement for staff to attend the meetings to answer questions on their now summary reports. CD prepared an opening speech which was read during the meeting. *(See appendices 1 for full speech)*

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 2.1 The meeting unanimously approved the minutes from the previous meeting. This was proposed by Richard Hudson - Yorkshire (RH) and seconded by Martin G Clark - Worcestershire (MGC).

2.2 ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- CD noted that there has been little follow through with the 7 points raised in the previous meeting. CD confirmed he has completed points 1, 5 and 7.
- 2.3 CD referred to point 2 and said that Simon Mills - Head of Coaching and Performance (SM) offered to look into why information packs were not been sent out in advance of the Hull Ping Pong Parlor. CD added that Jonathan Bruck - Head of Operations (JB) said he would put together a list of all Ping Pong Parlours on the Table Tennis England.
 - 2.4 Sara Sutcliffe (CEO) said that this information is available on the Table Finder tool and on the Ping! website but confirmed she will check. D Livingstone (Director) confirmed that he could find them lists on the Ping! website

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- 2.5 CD continued addressing the actions from the previous meeting and mentioned the missing competitions report written by SM which was not circulated to NC. CD requested a copy of the report to which SS confirmed it will be distributed.
- 2.6 CD also noted that MC's questions which were asked prior to the meeting were not communicated with NC as requested.
- 2.7 CD asked for the actions to be met as previously discussed.
- 2.8 MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE IN THE AGENDA**
No matters were raised.
- 3. 19.1.1 REPORT BY TABLE TENNIS ENGLAND TO INCLUDE: REPORT FROM BOARD, CEO & DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**
- 3.1 CD explained that the meeting will run through the document in order of the sub headings and that anything raised should be in accordance to the section discussed at the time.
- 3.2 BOARD REPORT**
Sandra Deaton – Chair (SD) had nothing to add to her report and welcomed any questions.
- 3.3 Estyn Williams – Warwickshire (EJW) referred to point 3 within the written questions of the report and asked about the concept of encouraging groups which are not traditional leagues or clubs, to become Table Tennis England members. For example U3A would be a good initiative to have a connection with, to enable access to their individual members.
- 3.4 SD clarified that this is a priority and that there is a review of the membership structure taking place, including social/commercial table tennis environments such as U3A, schools etc. as there are hundreds of people playing table tennis each day. SD explained that the review will cover how these players might be brought into the membership so Table Tennis England can track data such as the numbers of social players, what activities are taking place and be able to communicate with them as well.
- 3.5 Susie Hughes - Deputy Chair (SH) added that the U3A is a great organisation and have thriving table tennis clubs with thousands of people playing our sport. SH said that previously the U3A was localised however now they have a national coordinator for table tennis who she is in contact with, and has passed the details over to Table Tennis England.
- 3.6 EJW questioned why the review has been put on hold until the new CRM system is in place. He expressed that this shouldn't be stalled as there are other things which can be done in the meantime.
- 3.7 SD explained that until the new CRM system is in place the data cannot be collected however this does not mean it has been put on hold. Currently it is in talks of how the players can be attracted and what Table Tennis England can offer them.
- 3.8 SS said that this is a constant focus area and an obvious area for potential membership but urged expectations to be managed. Currently the local community groups do not see why they should be associated to the NGB and this is a common problem effecting a lot of other sports as well. Unfortunately at present these players do not fit into our structure, unless U3A

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are willing to change their model to have a nationalised registration process along with the right agreements.

- 3.9 Noel Sewell – Wiltshire (NS) said that he is interested to know the membership current figures.
- 3.10 SS confirmed that there are about 20,000 associate and 25,000 paid members.
- 3.11 Alan E Ransome OBE – Cleveland (AER) asked if it is possible for SH to circulate the contact details for the U3A so each local NC can get in touch and help with the initiative. AER also said traditionally the membership figures were communicated with NC and asked if this could be continued.
- 3.12 SH agreed with AER and said that she would contact the national coordinator and ask for permission to pass on the contact details to NC to enable collaboration. (*See action 1 of action appendices*)
- 3.13 EJW raised a point of order, as the microphone was producing a lot of feedback, he said that anybody with a loud voice should not use it. CD agreed with this however mentioned that the point of the microphone was to enable the dictaphone to pick up everything that is said.
- 3.14 AER spoke about the Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships 2019 and confirmed that they will take place in India between 17th – 22nd July and that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) will take place at the World Championships at the end of April in Budapest, Hungary. AER added that there is a critical point on the AGM agenda, which is that they are going to reduce the number of teams in the World Team Championships to 32 which will have serious effects on England.

3.15 CEO REPORT

- 3.16 SS said that she has nothing to add to her report and welcomed any questions.
- 3.17 Alex Murdoch – Bedfordshire (AM) congratulated Table Tennis England on the £275,000 awarded from UK Sport.
- 3.18 MC questioned the move from Norfolk House to the National Badminton Centre and the security of tenure.
- 3.19 SS said that they have agreed a 3 year contract with a break clause which mirrors the previous agreement with Norfolk House whilst also saving money on rent.
- 3.20 No further questions were asked about the CEO report.

3.21 DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS - PERFORMANCE

- 3.22 AER had 4 points to raise about the departmental reports.
1. He noted the participation in the European Team Competition in 2019 and expressed concern that they have ended up in the position of last chance qualifiers.

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2. AER referred to a recent home match loss, which Liam Pitchford could not attend due to a French match clash and asked for some light to be shed on the situation going forward.

3. AER questioned what the plan is for the European Youth Championships (EYC) concerning the England Young Squad (EYS) as they are due to take place in the summer and there has been a lack of communication around the changes.

4. Finally, AER shared concern about the closure of the National Training Centre in Ackworth and requested further information about this.

3.23

1. SS agreed that it is concerning and explained that there are real challenges with the home and away format of the competition.

2. SS said there are event clashes in May for Liam Pitchford and Sam Walker due to Pro A League matches which will be difficult to overcome however they are currently going through negotiations to be released for the international competitions.

3. SS explained that no matter what changes are introduced to the EYS, they will not be accepted by everyone. The principle is not that it is the squad which selections will come from, it is the squad which professional coaches have determined are the ones who are worthy of the most amount of national coaching time. However this does not preclude others from being selected for the team.

SS clarified that there has been ample communication about the changes made and the parents are fully informed. Additionally SD read out one of the emails circulated with the parents, which demonstrates how clear the communications around the changes were.

4. SS said with regards to the closure of the National Training Centre in Ackworth the underlying issue was that it was unfortunately not working and there wasn't enough buy-in. The school however are going to continue with promoting the sport and are going to use it to attract students therefore ensuring a legacy from the NTC.

3.24 AER questioned whether a full team is going to be sent to the EYC as this wasn't the case last year.

3.25 SS said that this hasn't been confirmed yet but once a decision has been made it will be published on the website.

3.26 Neil Hurford – Oxfordshire (NH) said that he found AER's questions enlightening and asked for a separate document produced aside from the minutes which covers the points in more depth, as the information is beyond what is expected of the minutes.

3.27 SS agreed that this can be done.

3.28 Phil Ashleigh – Essex (PA) referred to the office move to the National Badminton Centre and asked if the new facilities can be used for future table tennis events going forward.

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3.29 SS said that this is the intention and they are in talks with Badminton England to see if this is possible. Currently the lighting in the building is not suitable for competitions however training camps are a possibility once the halls have been revamped.

3.30 DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS – DEVELOPMENT AND VOLUNTEERING

3.31 SS spoke about the National Conference, encouraged everyone to attend and asked NC to spread the word to their clubs and leagues. She said it is going to be a very enjoyable and interactive weekend.

3.32 DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS – MASS PARTICIPATION

No questions were asked.

3.33 DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS - COMPETITIONS AND EVENTS

3.34 AER asked if the National Championships qualifiers that took place in Preston were a success and expressed concern about the standard of play as four juniors had qualified from Ormesby. SD responded that the event was a success. AER added that there was no mention about the British League in the report and that he would like to know more information such as the finances and the success of the events.

3.35 SS pointed out that the information about all events is readily available on the website. National Councillors have a duty to communicate all news/information and should be actively seeking it where possible. Resources are currently stretched and it is unreasonable to expect staff to continually write more reports, especially when the information has already been produced and released publicly on the website. In the interest of efficiency, SS questioned if going forward it would be helpful to provide more links in reports so NC can easily access the information online.

3.36 CD noted SS's points however questioned whether it was possible to ask volunteers to produce the reports instead.

3.37 AER said he would prefer to see minutes from meetings highlighting the organisation of events and how they are run, rather than reading the reports on the website showing the wins and losses.

3.38 Doug Livingstone - Director (DL) supported SS and said that it is more logical to ask staff to spend time activity doing their job as opposed to producing reports. The whole point of NC is that it runs itself and that they should find their own information. To which EJW agreed and CD disagreed. CD said there is a defined structure within the competitions department and NC should not be circumventing that structure. It is the responsibility of the head of competitions to produce a meaningful report. If that means delegating elements to the volunteers, that is fine, but NC should not be going direct.

3.39 SS noted the points made and said that she will consider the best solution.

3.40 Jim Skinner – Sussex (JS) asked about the progress on the negotiations and funding for TT365 and requested an update.

3.41 The meeting noted that CD could not respond as there is a conflict of interest with regards to TT365.

- 3.42 SS explained that the negotiations are ongoing and there is a willingness from both sides to keep providing TT365 League Manager. Neil Hurford urged both parties to reach agreement.
- 3.43 MGC questioned why the finance reports are no longer included.
- 3.44 SS said that the Board took the decision to not include them as the finances are regularly reviewed by the Finance Committee and then the Board. The audited accounts will be available at the AGM.
- 3.45 MGC felt that as the company members with a £10 commitment in the event of insolvency that they should still review the finances.
- 3.46 JS responded that as previously involved with Company Boards it was generally the case that management accounts are not made publicly available outside of an AGM, and so did not see why TTE Board should be expected to do otherwise other than a summary.
- 3.46 Update on MAG (Member's Advisory Group)**
SD spoke about the interview process for MAG and said that close to 30 people applied to be on the committee from all age ranges. 8-12 people will from the MAG group and will meet for the first time at the National Conference.
- 3.47 NS questioned who nominated those who sit on the panel to interview the applicants applying for MAG.
- 3.48 SD said the Elected Directors invited individuals to be on the Interview Panels.
- 3.49 Sue Hayes – Buckinghamshire (SH) asked about the decision making process and whether the MAG members will be a broad group.
- 3.50 SD explained that all the people who have applied to be part of MAG have a connection to the sport however it was important to look to those who are able to look at the bigger picture and look past their personal interests.
- 4. FUTURE OF THE VOTING SYSTEM**
In this section the Councillors had the opportunity to ask questions and give feedback on the Company Member and Voting Review Group papers.
- 4.1 Tom Purcell – Director (TP) introduced the topic and said that it is recommended by the Review Group that the current weighted voting system is to change to become more democratic. He explained that 2 proposals have been put forward, either one Company Member one vote and/or directly affiliated clubs also get a vote.
- 4.2 Diane M Jermyn - Cornwall (DMJ) asked for clarification in terms of the value of one vote, does it mean just one vote and is irrespective of the size of the league. TP confirmed that is correct and added that each league will get one vote and each county will also get one vote under the proposal.

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- 4.3 AM was in support of the proposed new voting system in principle however disagreed about having no weighting to the votes.
- 4.4 TP said that the concern has been noted and it was decided that a directly affiliated club/league has to have a minimum number of paying members in order to qualify for a company member vote. He stated that the minimum number is yet to be decided.
- 4.5 AER referred to a section within the proposal and disagreed that the current system is illogical and lacks transparency as it reads in the report, he said that it followed the parliamentary voting system.
- 4.6 NH explained that the proposal was not to be taken as a criticism. He added that the IRP believes that this is the right way to operate, as it is an honest and transparent way of voting and that the existing weighted votes was an unfair system in many ways.
- 4.7 SD added that by continuing using the current voting system, National Councillors alone are able to wipe out paying members votes and they end up not being able to have a say. SD said that it is also very confusing and a lot of people do not understand how it works, therefore it makes sense to simplify it to one organisation one vote.
- 4.8 DMJ said that she agrees with everything SD said however pointed out that as a National Councillor she represented the members, therefore votes as instructed and not how she personally sees fit. She added that a lot of members do not open emails so will not be clued up on current table tennis affairs, so questioned whether they would be able to make informed decisions or even vote at all.
- 4.9 EJW said that he is in agreement with the proposal and can't see a more fair solution. He also queried what is considered to be a reasonable size for a club/league to qualify for a vote.
- 4.10 SHu supports the proposal and said that small clubs should be entitled to vote, as it will make them feel as though they have a voice and will encourage them to get more involved with the sport and perhaps recruit more members.
- 4.11 CD believed that technology would be able to assist the voting system to make it autonomous and fair, and that he put this idea forward a couple of years ago and is disappointed that this hasn't been considered in the proposal. TP and CD agreed to further discuss this idea after the meeting.
- 4.12 NH said that CD's idea was discussed by the IRP and found a measure of favour however it was agreed that the technology isn't quite ready but it is a feasible option going forward.
- 4.13 CD disagreed with NH and stated that he is confident technology is advanced enough. TP confirmed it will be put forward as a possible option.
- 4.14 Alan Thompson – Durham (AT) supports the proposal however questioned a statement within it about technology not being entirely robust to support the voting system which contradicts what CD has said. AT added that it would be a good idea to work together to

come up with a strong solution. To which SD agreed and reiterated that TP will take the idea back to the Board.

- 4.15 CD summarised the discussion and observed that there is a sizable amount of support for the proposal and said that there is a broad agreement that the voting system is due for renewal. CD said that if NC would like to discuss this topic again before the AGM this won't be possible due to the meeting funding cut earlier discussed. He believes the topic warrants further consideration and that it will not get through the AGM without it.
- 4.16 PA agreed that there is further scope for further debate and then encouraged the use of the online forum to take it forward.
- 4.17 CD questioned whether the Board still intend to take the proposal to the AGM this year. To which TP confirmed, with all things considered, the review panel will report to the Board on 1st March to discuss the next steps.

5. FUTURE OF NATIONAL COUNCIL

In this section the Councillors had the opportunity to debate the recent decision by the Board to reduce funding and meeting support for National Council and debate the impact MAG will have on National Council's role.

- 5.1 NS stated that he is not in support of the proposal of having just 2 NC meetings a year and suggested a compromise of having 3 instead.
- 5.2 CD spoke about how the use of technology can aid NC to meet less, however observing the lack of interest with the online forum it has been proven that this isn't a viable option at this stage. CD explained that if NC could give it chance, it could really be successful.
- 5.3 SH said that although she hasn't directly contributed to the online platform, it doesn't mean she hasn't logged on and looked at the content. This could also be the case for other users, therefore the measurement of impact shouldn't be based on comments made online.
- 5.4 CD asked if those who do log on to the forum, could be active to give a clear indication of engagement.
- 5.5 SD agreed with CD that welcoming virtual interactions is a good idea and could work well for NC. It is also cost effective and saves a lot of resources.
SD continued, the IRP review recommendations were accepted. This set out the introduction of MAG and once it is established they will need to find funding for the meetings too.
Finally, SD clarified that the Board are not preventing NC from meeting more than 2 times per year but only that it was agreed to financially support 2 meetings going forward. This does not stop NC from self-funding other meetings if it was felt necessary.
- 5.6 There was some misunderstanding about the Board's decision to reduce the amount of funded meetings, so CD took the decision to interject the debate and reiterated what SD had previously said. CD said that the meetings hold less value if staff/Board are no longer required to attend to answer questions and the reports have been reduced.

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- 5.7 EJW questioned the effectiveness of NC and highlighted that it costs about £5,000 to run each meeting. There are also other things to consider such as giving staff their time back in lieu as the meetings take place on the weekend.
On the other hand, EJW agreed that the new style of reports are lacking and would find it useful if more information was included. EJW said he did not object to shorter reports as such but where councillors submitted written questions they should be given more helpful answers. He had submitted four written questions and the answers were all in effect variations of 'we are working on it' rather than supplying the information requested.
- 5.8 DJ Edwards – Hertfordshire (DJE) said that if it is decided that 4 NC meetings per year are needed, perhaps Table Tennis England could part-fund the additional 2 meetings as a compromise.
- 5.9 SHu noted that it is important to remember that the Board are here to support NC and if NC continues as it is, it will cease to exist. To summarise, SHu encourages a more positive debate to which the room was in agreement with.
- 5.10 MGC said that NC is an advisory committee and that the purpose of it is to make suggestions and work together to make the sport better for everyone. He said that he believes if the NC meetings cost £5,000 each then it is worth the money to continue to run them, as it isn't a huge amount in the grand scheme of things.
- 5.11 CD and AER said that it would be valuable to have an open invite for the MAG to attend NC, as it would make sense to work together and broaden the knowledge/experience brought to the meeting.
- 5.12 CD said he wants the chance to be able to fix NC and said that it will remain on the agenda until this happens and as long as he is the Chair of the meeting.
- 5.13 JS proposed that a sub-group should be set up to discuss how NC can be improved.
- 5.14 The following people agreed to form this sub-group:
1. DM Jermyn (Cornwall)
2. C Dangerfield (Shropshire and Chair)
3. S Hayes (Buckinghamshire)
4. AE Ransome OBE (Cleveland)
5. John Cowell (Derbyshire)
6. P Hadley (Deputy NC Dorset)
7. Jim Skinner (Sussex)
- 5.15 CD said he will review the events calendar and work out the best date for the next NC meeting.

The meeting concluded at 15:53pm.

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Appendix

1. Chris Dangerfield's (Chair) speech

You should all have received the paper-work submitted to this council by the office.

You will also have received an email a few days earlier from Sandra that in summary said that the board had decided that they would only fund 2 meetings a year from next season.

They have also taken the decision to remove the requirement for staff to attend this meeting, to answer questions on their reports, on the basis of what will now be a single summary report that will encapsulate everything the board feel we need to know.

At the very end of last year, I had a meeting arranged with Sandra and Sara. The meeting was called at their request, so I can only assume it was their intention to discuss these changes with me, but due to unforeseen circumstances, I had to cancel that meeting and despite best efforts it was not possible to re-arrange. Clearly I have to accept that there was an attempt made to speak with me about these changes... but I can say with certainty, that had these changes been put to me as Chair of National Council, I would have rejected them out-right... but sadly I seriously doubt that my objection would have had any impact and we would still find ourselves in this most serious position.

Now... some of you may say, what position?
Well, in my view, it is "The end of National Council".

For those that read the Sandra's email you might think, this is not the end, we will just meet less and have more discussion remotely via the new National Council website... and on first thought that does sound like a reasonable position to take.

But... The new website, despite the hours of work I put in and my best efforts to get you all to get involved at the last meeting, has been a dismal failure with only 5 of you posting anything in nearly 5 months.

As far as meetings go, it is my view that without a thriving online community, 2 meetings a year is not enough for national council to perform its role successfully. A very long time ago, some very wise people decided on 4 meetings a year; and it makes me wonder what they would make of a board that ignored standing orders and made decisions without our consent, or even consultation.

Is that actually true, did the board just ignore the standing orders for National Council?
Well yes, they did. First off, NC is supposed to prescribe and regulate its own procedures that is a line from our articles of association 36.3 to be precise. This single line means we are supposed to self-determine how our meetings are run. Our standing orders *which is a formal document that forms part of our sports governance state* that the Chairman approves the agenda for National Council, but the agenda you have today, is not what I created, it has been adjusted and sent to you with changes to the reporting section and timings for the day, without my consent. Next, standing orders state that the Chair, CEO and heads of department should submit reports.

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I suppose you could argue that this has been done in part, there is in fact a section from each department but come on... The report we received contains little to no value, this is clear from the lack of questions that have been asked prior to today's meeting. Only 1 councillor submitted questions and of the 4 he asked, only 1 of them was in direct response to a statement made in the report.

So, I took the liberty of transforming the submitted report into a new document; I removed the headings and subheading and got rid of the white space. There is less than 2 pages of actual content, which is supposed to report on the activity of our entire sport for the past 5 months. The board report from September is even worse; take out the un-necessary aspects of that, and there is only 18 lines of text and did you know that item 8.1 of our standing orders, requires the company Chair to table the minutes of any board meetings since the last council meeting.

What is really happening here... is death by a thousand paper-cuts. The board knows that National Council will never vote with a 75% majority to remove itself, therefore it is taking a different path that ultimately leads to the same result. And this is no exaggeration, I have had more than one prominent councillor ask me what is the point of National Council now. 2 meetings a year destroys our ability to be in anyway effective, and even if, as a unified council, we fight the board and find a way to force these 4 meetings to be maintained...

If no staff have to turn up and the reports continue to offer such little value; what exactly is the point in even meeting once a year?

I stood for Chairman on the basis of 3 key points and I have delivered the first 2, but the 3rd was around the future of National Council, because I believe it is an essential body within our sport and I saw this coming over a year ago, that is why I stood for Chair of this council... and when I did stand I received support from more than 75% of you.

This gave me the confidence to take a hard stance against these types of under-handed tactics. The only question is do I still have that level of support? Are you happy to see National Council minimised to the point where its existence serves little more than to supply those of us who turn up, with a free lunch OR do you feel like me and that something needs to be done and done now, because this is only the start. This afternoon we will discuss a voting review paper which the board have already sanctioned... and it's just another step towards the complete degradation of the county structure, it's a future where your vote which represents hundreds if not thousands of members, counts for no more than a club of a dozen members, some of which won't even be paying members.

So wrapping up, maybe I should rename this part of the agenda from Chairman's Intro, to Chairman's Rant... but you know... those of you that know me, know this is all coming from the passion I have for our sport... and I am furious that the board think they can just rail-road these types of changes on us. If you want to fight this, I will stand again for Chair next season and I will work with you to transform this council into a more modern and effective body that truly fulfils its obligation to members; or you can just let it die, but I shall not be involved in that and in a few years' time this council simply won't exist.

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Action Appendix

This section includes actions discussed and agreed upon in the meeting.

Action Number	Assigned to	Action Description
1	SH	Contact national coordinator of U3A and ask for consent to circulate contact details to National Council so they can get in touch and work together.
2	SS	Distribute the missing competitions report from Sept meeting
3	SS	As requested by NH, a separate document to be produced which expands more on the questions raised by AER in point 3.22
4	SS	Report back on the production of meaningful reports balancing the need for information against the staff time taken to produce.
5	CD	Setup the sub-group to look at the future of national council