

National Council Draft Minutes 22 October 2022



PRESENT

National Badminton Centre & Zoom*

10:30am

Estyn Williams (Chair – Warwickshire)

National Councillors: David L Hockney* (Avon), Alexander Murdoch* (Bedfordshire), Jonathon Hopson* (Berkshire), Alan E Ransome OBE* (Cleveland), Reinhard Lindner* (Dorset), Allan Thompson* (Durham), David Edwards* (Hertfordshire), James Bolton* (Lancashire), Tim Giles* (Isle of Wight), Malcolm Allsop* (Nottingham), Neil Hurford (Oxfordshire), Chris Dangerfield* (Shropshire), Jos Kelly (Somerset), Margot Fraser* (Surrey), Noel Sewell (Wiltshire), Martin Clark* (Worcestershire)

Deputy National Councillors:

Brian Whitehead (Buckinghamshire), Darren Morgan* (Cheshire), Eddie Roof* (Gloucestershire), Mike Holt* (Leicestershire), Kevin Long* (Sussex), Joshua Reynolds (Yorkshire)

Other: Mike Smith (BUCS) (MS)*, Mike Atkinson* (South Regional Committee Chair)

Board Members: Sandra Deaton (SD), Adrian Christy (AC) Emma Vickers (EV)*, Don Parker (DP)*,

Staff: Jo Keay-Blyth (JKB), Neil Rogers* (NR), Sue Wressell (SW)

Minutes : Sue Wressell (SW)

Apologies for Non-Attendance: National Councillors, Deputy National Councillors & Board

Susan Hayes (Buckinghamshire), Brian Freer (Cambridgeshire), Karen Tonge OBE (Cheshire), Ken McLeod (Hampshire), Harry Jutle (Herefordshire) Shirley Pickering (Leicester), Neil Le Milliere (Kent), Ivor Jones (Northampton), Gareth Pearson (Northumberland), James Kenny (South Yorkshire), Tony Catt (Sussex) Richard B Hudson (Yorkshire), Susie Venner (Director), Ritchie Venner (Director), Priya Samuel (Director)

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Agenda Item	Discussion	Decision/Action	Who	When
1	<p>Chairman Opening Remarks, Update & Welcome EW (Chair - Warwickshire) welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Sue Wressell (SW) who was attending her first National Council. He thanked JKB and SW for the administration of the meeting.</p> <p>Feedback from National Council is welcomed following this meeting and is to be sent to EW(Chair), JKB and SW.</p> <p>a. Register of Business Interests None</p> <p>b. Obituaries EW (Chair) asked everyone to remember those we have lost since the National Council last met. The meeting held a one-minute standing silence in their memory.</p>			
2	<p>Minutes from last meeting The minutes from 11 June 2022 were taken as a true and accurate record.</p> <p>Matters Arising</p> <p>EW explained that JKB was not going to ask for discussion of her paper on increasing the number of virtual only meetings at this meeting but could do so if she wished at a future meeting. The January 2023 meeting would, in any case be virtual only.</p> <p>The question raised by Neil Hurford regarding survey results being communicated was discussed and it was agreed that people being asked to complete a survey in future would be notified whether the results would be shared or whether they were for operational, internal use.</p>	<p>Decision: National Council approved the minutes of 11th June 2022 by a show of hands</p>		Oct 22

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3	<p>Competitions Review – presentation and update</p> <p>NR provided context to the National Council on the paper that had been previously circulated and updated them on the review. He explained the detail about the robust process undertaken so far to reach the point that the review was currently at.</p> <p>AR (Cleveland) updated the meeting on the outcomes of a National Council Sub Committee meeting held earlier in the week which included external experts with knowledge and experience in competition and tournaments. Although the Sub Committee had fully appreciated the effort and work that had been put into the Review, their response to it was not a positive one. The Sub Committee felt that the proposed structure would not be sustainable and would increase costs for players and clubs. Their unanimous view was that the Review was going in the wrong direction to be able to support table tennis in the country.</p> <p>There was also concern expressed by the Sub Committee that the County Championships might be scrapped. The current Championships provide kudos for cadets and juniors who wanted to play for their Counties and move up the game. It was felt by the group that there had been little consultation undertaken with the British League about the review.</p> <p>AR (Cleveland) further explained that the Sub Committee were proposing that there should be an opportunity for Councillors to return to their Councils to discuss the Review and provide feedback at the next Council meeting in January, before any Board approval was sought.</p> <p>EW (Chair - Warwickshire) explained that members of his county had attended a seminar earlier in the week and there was a lot of alarm from them over the future of the County Championships, especially around the Cadets. Several counties felt the same.</p> <p>JK (Somerset) felt that if changes happened over a longer period of time, the review might be better received, rather than people feeling it was a ground zero approach and everything might change overnight. Further consideration also needed to be given in the proposed calendar for the events run by BUCS and VETs and the school holidays etc.</p> <p>MC (Worcestershire) was encouraged to see that the importance of the Para players was raised in the review which will help the development of wheelchair players. 1* and 2* would have to be considered together with the quality of umpires to understand the additional needs of para players.</p>			
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	<p>MF (Surrey) questioned whether availability of venues had been considered as this was not included in the review.</p> <p>NH (Oxfordshire) said he and Dave Goulden had an extensive discussion with NR and AC and both were very pleased to see that there was still a commitment to the County Championships together with a brief to look at innovation on specific issues. They were comfortable that all aspects of the individual competitions were looked at and if they could be made better, that was the best way forward.</p> <p>CD (Shropshire) felt it was very important for Councillors to take this information away and discuss it fully with the Councils to ensure the information sinks in and is understood fully by them. The County Championships were very important to Shropshire and it was important that Counties had a chance to understand fully what was being proposed and be able to bring that feedback to the next meeting.</p> <p>From an elite perspective and through his role of Chair of the Talent & Performance Committee, DP (Director) was pleased to see the concept of a national series which might encourage players to play in tournaments in the UK rather than overseas.</p> <p>DM (DNC for Cheshire) felt it was a great strategy and appreciated the amount of work that had gone into it and that some time for reflection might be the best way forward.</p> <p>SD (TTE Chair) reminded the meeting that the Competition Review had been undertaken because there had been a lot of complaints by members that the Competition Programme was not fit for purpose. This is why a steering group, Chaired by NR, had been put together, of experts in their field, to identify a better way forward. SD appreciated that maybe a slower move on this might be better for Counties to deliberate but it was important to make fundamental changes to those parts of the Programme that don't work to ensure it became fit for purpose for future players. SD requested that the notes from the meeting of the Sub Committee be sent to the Board in time for the December meeting.</p> <p>This was agreed by AR (Cleveland), who offered any other National Councillors who might want to join the Sub Committee to let him know. The Sub Committee had also felt that without any costings to the proposals, it was difficult to see how the programme was affordable for counties, clubs and players. They would like to see costings for the programme.</p>	<p>Action: The Select Committee notes to be provided to the Board for the December meeting</p>	<p>AR</p>	<p>November 2022</p>
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	<p>SD (TTE Chair) confirmed that the next stage of the Review would be looking at a lot of the issues raised at the meeting, especially around costings. She agreed that Councillors should have an opportunity to return to their Counties and discuss the proposals. However, she was disappointed by the lack of engagement by Councillors at the recent webinars that had been set up to provide information to members.</p> <p>NR thanked everyone for the feedback received during the discussion which he had found helpful and informative and he would take it all back to the Competition Steering Group for full review and to see how it could be fed back into the next reiteration.</p> <p>EW (Chair – Warwickshire) thanked NR for attending the meeting and for his presentation.</p>			
4	<p>Update on Strategy Reset</p> <p>AC (CEO) spoke to the presentation, sent ahead of the National Council Meeting, and gave a full update on the current status of the Strategy.</p> <p>The first draft of an Implementation Plan for the Strategy would be produced in January 2023 and AC was currently also working on a Major Event Strategy.</p> <p>A new organisation chart would be circulated when the Structural Review had been completed.</p> <p>NS (Wiltshire) was concerned that recent material from TTE did not give a sufficient breakdown of the registered player figures. Analysis first by gender and then shown as Cadets, Juniors, Seniors and Veterans was an essential requirement. The season 2019 -2020 should be the sensible baseline from which numbers progress would become visible year on year and then more easily understood by the membership. AC (CEO) agreed and he then commented that even further numbers refinement would be required.</p> <p>NS also enquired about his suggestion of a Ideas Committee and it was confirmed that the Governance & Risk Committee would be considering a paper on a proposed Committee Structure moving forward and the Ideas Committee would be part of that consideration as part of a tier 2 committee.</p> <p>AR (Cleveland) asked whether areas would split counties into two sections and AC confirmed that this would not be the case. Areas would only have whole counties within them, they were split more along local authority lines.</p>			

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	<p>AR (Cleveland) suggested that the two departments of Development and Competition might work better if kept separate. AC explained that it was the job of the incoming Head of Table Tennis Development to lead and join both parts of the organisation seamlessly.</p> <p>MC (Worcestershire) suggested it was time to bring finance operations back in house rather than with Jockey Club and that Sam Garey’s role of Head of Finance should sit below the CEO role and then other Heads of should sit beneath that. MC also reminded the meeting that the last Appointed Director should have had more of a Finance bias but this had not happened.</p> <p>AC explained that it would be too costly to bring the finance operation systems back in house. He also would not sit the Head of Finance role beneath him as that would mean that Sam would be line managing other Heads of roles. A Finance Director would likely be considered for the next Director role that becomes vacant to support the Head of Finance and Steve Kemish. The Board had discussed the skills set required this year and felt that Richard Ayers would be of greater benefit to the organisation.</p>			
5	<p>Membership Review</p> <p>AC (CEO) presented his first thoughts on a revised Membership proposal as he mentioned at the AGM. This had been based on many discussions with TTE members over the past six months. Costings within the presentation were illustrative and not written in stone.</p> <p>It was proposed that the new system would provide a better value proposition to members in helping them to see what they get from their membership but also to recognise that they are putting back into the sport rather than seeing it as a ‘tax’.</p> <p>AC took the meeting through his thoughts on a new draft membership proposition that looked at different packages that a member could take up.</p> <p>Consultation would be undertaken over the next few weeks to ensure that this work could move forward in time for the next membership season. If it was not possible to do this effectively, the project would be shelved until it could be undertaken in a meaningful way and brings members with it.</p>			

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	<p>EW (Chair – Warwickshire) expressed concern about the financial modelling and how robust it was, especially if there was a drop in numbers of members who took out the higher packages. AC explained that projections would be thoroughly tested although a small drop was expected.</p> <p>Many members were impressed with the ambitions within the Review and felt that it was exactly what was needed. The key to success was in the detail which would be fleshed out more. It was suggested that more higher end packages could be considered in addition to the ones listed.</p> <p>The drop in membership between the ages of 18 and 22 was raised and it was suggested a conversation with BUCS would be productive to assist in keeping this age group engaged with Table Tennis England once they've left school and are in college/university.</p> <p>AC confirmed that members would be expected to sign up to a 12-month agreement, especially those who compete as this would otherwise affect the rankings adversely.</p> <p>AC was thanked for his presentation. Details of the consultation would be circulated to members shortly.</p>	<p>Action: Details of consultation to be circulated to members</p>	<p>SLT team</p>	<p>ASAP</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Select Committee on the Constitution Update</p> <p>AR (Cleveland) updated on the Select Committee Review that had reported at the AGM and put forward proposals at that meeting. He asked whether the online directory of members, should they agree to have their details shared, was still in hand. AR and AC had been speaking about the voting structure and this would be raised with the Select Committee.</p> <p>AC (CEO) confirmed that there had been no progress on the directory since the AGM as the focus had been on the strategy, membership renewals, membership structure and restructure of the organisation.</p>			
<p>7</p>	<p>Reports</p> <p>a. TTE Chair</p> <p>NH (Oxfordshire) was pleased and impressed to see from the Chair's report that several Table Tennis England staff had taken some of their annual holiday to volunteer at the recent Commonwealth Games to help make it a success and he wanted to pass on his appreciation to everyone who did this.</p>			

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	<p>b. CEO Update (including Management Report to the Board, CEO Updates and Board minutes)</p> <p>AC (CEO) explained that the Management Report was presented to the Board every quarter and was updated monthly by the Senior Leadership Team. Anything else of relevance to the Board was included at the end under Other Relevant Matters. It was noted that Nicole Flaherty had recently left Table Tennis England after only joining in June and this was down to ill health. EW asked that best wishes be passed to Nicole.</p> <p>The Interviews for the post of Head of Table Tennis Development were taking place on 28 October. A long list of nine candidates had been considered and five would be interviewed.</p> <p>The GBTT Nominations Committee would be meeting to consider applications for the Chair of GBTT and two non-executive directors. All three appointments would be independent directors. They would join the other four members, all representing each of the home nations.</p> <p>c. Finance Report</p> <p>It was noted that the Finance Report was for Quarter 1, not Quarter 2, although we were now at the end of Quarter 2. It was explained that this was dependent on when the Finance and Risk Meeting met to review the Quarter 2 figures, which would be in November 2022.</p> <p>MC (Worcestershire) asked what the B2022 Innovation and Digital income was together with the UK Sport Progression. It was explained that the B2022 was a one-off grant to help with innovation and digital work and the Progression funding was for the system development of the GB programme.</p> <p>JK (Somerset) suggested that printing needs should be considered, after many of the Centenary books were still to be sold and this was taken on board.</p> <p>d. MAG Report</p> <p>There was nothing to add.</p> <p>e. Other Reports (including Select Committees)</p>			
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	There were no other reports			
	<p>AOB</p> <p>Discussion was held on the date for the National Council meeting clashing with a VETS British League tournament and EW (Chair – Warwickshire) explained the difficulties or setting dates for the meetings to ensure the TTE Chair and CEO were available, as well as the position of the meeting after Board and Finance meetings.</p> <p>AR (Cleveland) explained that the Calendar Committee stills meets and would be able to provide suggestions. The date for January was already agreed as 14th and JKB and SW would work through some suggested dates from April 2023 to June 2024. These would be included in the next meeting agenda.</p> <p>EW (Chair – Warwickshire) confirmed that the January meeting would be a Zoom only meeting.</p>	<p>Action: JKB/SW to produce diary of NC dates for 2023/24 after consulting with Calendar Committee</p>	JKB/SW	Nov/Dec 2023

Action	Owner	Timeline
The Select Committee notes to be provided to the Board for the December meeting	AR	November 2022
Details of Membership Review consultation to be circulated to members	SLT	ASAP
JKB/SW to produce diary of NC dates for 2023/24 after consulting with Calendar Committee	JKB/SW	Nov/Dec 2023