

# National Council Final Minutes 21 October 2023



## **PRESENT**

Hybrid meeting held at TTE Boardroom, Loughton Lodge, Bradwell Road, Milton Keynes and by Zoom Conference call

### **10.30 am**

Neil Le Milliere (Kent – Chair for the meeting)

### **National Councillors:**

Susan Hayes (Buckinghamshire), Alexander Murdoch\* (Bedfordshire), Jonathan Hopson\* (Berkshire), Susan Hayes (Buckinghamshire), Karen Tonge OBE\* (Cheshire), Alan Ransome OBE (Cleveland), Jon Bayliss\* (Derbyshire), Reinhard Lindner\* (Dorset), Jonathan Stubbs\* (Hampshire), David Edwards (Hertfordshire), Tim Giles\* (Isle of Wight), Gareth Pearson\* (Northumberland), Neil Hurford (Oxfordshire), James Kenny (South Yorkshire), Margot Fraser\* (Surrey), Estyn Williams\* (Warwickshire), Noel Sewell (Wiltshire), Martin Clark\* (Worcestershire), Joshua Reynolds (Yorkshire) Stephen Longmoor\* (Somerset), Mike Smith\* (BUCS)

### **Deputy National Councillors:**

Clive Ellison\* (Avon), Susie Venner (Lancashire), Mike Holt\* (Leicestershire), Kevin Long\* (Sussex)

**Board Members:** Jos Kelly (JS), Don Parker\* (DP), Ritchie Venner (RV)

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

**Minutes:** Sue Wressell (SW)

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

Shaun Fitzpatrick (Avon), Phil Ashleigh (Essex), Harry Jutle (Herefordshire), Tom Purcell (Lancashire), Shirley Pickering (Leicestershire), Ivor Jones (Northamptonshire), Malcolm Allsop (Nottinghamshire), Stephen Joel (Somerset), Robert Loxley (South Yorkshire), Tony Catt (Sussex), Sandra Deaton (TTE Chair), Adrian Christy (TTE CEO) Kwadjo Adjepong (Appointed Director), Richard Ayers (Appointed Director), Mark Boote (Appointed Director), Sally Hughes (Elected Director), Ray James (Appointed Director) Steve Kemish (Appointed Director),

\*Attended by Zoom

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Agenda Item	Discussion	Decision/Action	Who	When
1	<p><b>Appointment of Chair</b>                      Alan Ransome, Cleveland, as Chair of the Select Committee on the Constitution, nominated Neil Le Milliere to be Chair for today's meeting.                      As the only nominated person, Neil Le Milliere, took on the appointment of Chair for the meeting.</p> <p>NLM explained that there would be no discussion about the dispute between Somerset TTC and Stephen Longmoor during the meeting due to this being subjugate and subject to appeal procedures.</p>			
2	<p><b>Approval of minutes of last meeting</b></p> <p>The Minutes were approved by a show of hands.</p> <p>EW was warmly thanked for all his work as Chair of the National Council.</p>			
3	<p><b>Register of Business Interests</b>                      None</p> <p><b>Obituaries</b>                      A minute's silence was held for Stan Clarke, Richard B Hudson, Brian Freeman (Wiltshire), And any other losses that Table Tennis had suffered since the last meeting.</p>			
4	<p><b>Report of the Select Committee on the Constitution and progress report on the election of National Chair</b></p> <p>The Select Committee report was received by the National Council and fully discussed.</p>			

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	<p>The current process for the election of the Chair of National Council was discussed. The recommendation of the Select Committee was that the current process should be terminated and a new process convened rather than a new Chair be appointed by default because another candidate had been removed from the process.</p> <p>The Council discussed the Select Committee’s points about the independence of National Councillors and their belief that a National Councillor was appointed for one year from the end of one AGM to the next, without challenge to that. AR explained that the Select Committee had carefully considered all the current rules and regulations relating to this matter and this included from the Articles 36.3 which stated that National Council preside and regulate its own procedures and have considered County Administration Regulation C10 to 13 and that National Council is responsible for its own elections.</p> <p>A few Councillors believed the National Councillor should represent their County’s views. It was also noted that following legal advice, TTE believed that the County had the power to remove a National Councillor mid-term if they felt that their Councillor was not representing them, and that SL was not currently a National Councillor as the appointment had been terminated by Somerset.</p> <p>After full discussion, the National Council voted in favour, by a show of hands, that they believed SL remained the National Councillor for Somerset and as such could put his name forward to the new election process for a new Chair of the Council. NC agreed that they would further consider the subject of the independence of NC in this respect and its practical implications at the January meeting.</p> <p>In addition, it was agreed, by a show of hands, that the current election process of electing a new Chair of the Council should be stopped and a new process would begin immediately.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> New process for a Chair of National Council to be started</p> <p><b>Action:</b> SO 2 to be updated with the amendments listed</p>	<p>Caroline Williams</p> <p>NC Select Committee</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>November 2023</p>
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	<p>The National Council further discussed Standing 2.1 on the retirement of the Chair of the National Council and it was agreed that the SO should be amended, as proposed by the Select Committee, to show:</p> <p><b>“The election of Chair of National Council will commence as quickly as possible after the close of nominations for the Councillors on the 15<sup>th</sup> June and that the election will take place during June and July, so that it is concluded as early as possible in July.”</b></p> <p>This would hopefully prevent a repeat of the current <b>void</b> situation of no Chair for the Council.</p> <p>This was unanimously approved by the Council by a show of hands.</p>			
5	<p><b>Review of the National Council Standing Orders</b></p> <p><b>Standing Order 2.1</b></p> <p>This was discussed and approved under Item 4, above.</p> <p><b>Standing Orders 19</b></p> <p>Discussion was held about appointments to the Select Committees of the National Council. Additional points under Standing Order 19 had been received by the Council, which discussed them in full.</p> <p>The additions to SO 19 and amendments to remove the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence from 19.2 were agreed by a show of hands.</p> <p>NH (Oxfordshire) requested that additional wording be added to item 19.2 to show that <b>“National Councillors should be encouraged to be part of Select Committees and Select Committees should be requested to make their membership as open and diverse as possible.”</b></p> <p>This proposal was unanimously approved, by a show of hands.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> SO 19 to be updated with the amendments listed</p>	<p>NC Select Committee</p>	<p>November 2023</p>

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6	<p><b>Report of other Select Committees</b></p> <p><b>Competition</b></p> <p>AR as Chair of the Select Committee on Competitions, reported that the Competition Review Sub-Committee had discussed the Competition Review Phase III, as approved by the TTE Board, that included amendments to the Junior/Cadet system and the National Championships. No progress had been made with the recommendations relating to the National Council recommendation for Junior and Cadet competition programme upgrading 4 Star tournaments to include visiting international teams and team events and it was felt by Select Committee that the current junior and cadet programme, including the changes proposed in the Competition Review did not go far enough to solve the problem of the junior and cadet programme being “not fit for purpose”.</p> <p>DP (Director) explained that the Select Committee recommendations were highly regarded and had been discussed, at length, by the Talent &amp; Performance Committee. It was recognised that the changes to the Review would ensure that there would be more opportunities for juniors and cadets to play but also wanted to ensure others had an opportunity to come up through the sport.</p> <p>RV (Director) confirmed that AR (Cleveland) as Chair of the Select Committee had been invited to the first two meetings of the Competition Committee, at which Junior/Cadets and Seniors had been discussed with many considerations taken on board in the revised Phase of the Review. A discussion had been held at the second Competition Committee meeting about 4* tournaments with foreign national athletes but there was no funding available to support this.</p> <p>RV explained that Gavin Evans (Head of Performance Development) had put in place a system whereby players needed to pay a minimum of three 4* tournaments in order to be considered for tournaments abroad. The remaining points raised by the Select Committee may come up for consideration in future, once the Competition Review has been implemented. There would</p>	<p><b>Action:</b></p>		

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	<p>always be an opportunity to review and revise any parts of the Review if it was felt they were not working or not make the impact expected and necessary. National Council’s proposal regarding the Senior National Championships has been discussed with regard to the qualification arrangements and spectators, TV viewer. Improvements had been agreed here with the qualification of including Grand Prix’ rather than a separate competition and improved programme for spectators and TV viewers of the tournament were in place for this season.</p> <p>The Select Committee were concerned that the Committee report that was discussed by Council at the January meeting had only two points discussed from the eleven included, and that the remaining nine still need full consideration.</p> <p>The paper provided by JB (Derbyshire) was discussed and whether clubs had been spoken to about the Junior British League going to three weekends. JB’s experience at the recent JBL weekend, after speaking to parents, players and coaches was that this was not seen as a good move. However, DP (Director) reported that those consulted as part of the TTE Competition Review thought it was a good idea. Either way it was agreed that the clubs should be consulted on their thoughts around this. RV would take this to the next Competition Committee meeting.</p> <p>RV confirmed that the British League Conference would be returning, via Zoom, rather than face to face.</p> <p>JK (South Yorkshire) raised the issue of the number of officials required to attend the events. At senior events, many players stand in, and SV (Lancashire) suggested that in this instance a reduction of cost should be considered to the entrance fee if there were insufficient officials to umpire the games.</p>	<p>RV to take the issue of JBL over 3 weekends to the next Competition Committee</p>	<p>RV</p>	<p>Next Competition Committee date</p>
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	<p><b>Disability</b></p> <p>The Council received the report from KT (Cheshire) who explained the work currently being undertaken. TTE were looking at grassroots level and a way to bring disabled players into the pathway. Area Managers would also be looking at grass roots disability.</p> <p>Members were reminded that TTE had a wider remit for disability that included all disabilities, whereas BPTT's focus is on Para Sport.</p>			
7	<p><b>Review of reappointment of Select Committees</b></p> <p><b>Select Committee on the Constitution</b></p> <p>The Council noted the reappointment of the members of the Select Committee on the Constitution and AR (Cleveland) and the Chair.</p> <p><b>Select Committee on Competitions</b></p> <p>The Council noted the reappointment of the members of the Select Committee on Competitions and AR (Cleveland) and the Chair.</p> <p><b>Select Committee on Disability</b></p> <p>The Council noted the reappointment of the members of the Select Committee on Disability and KT (Cheshire) and the Chair.</p> <p>It was agreed that all three committees should remain in place and any National or Deputy National Councillor wishing to join them, should put their name forward to the Chair of the Committee.</p>			

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8	<p><b>Area Development</b></p> <p>AW (Head of TT Development) provided the Council with a comprehensive update on the work of the new Area network. The presentation is included with the minutes.</p> <p>An area of the TTE website was being designed for the work of the Areas to be captured. This would also be included in Over the Net. A monthly digest would be produced for each Area with bite size news. This was expected in early November.</p> <p>MC (Worcestershire) asked about the monies held by the previous regions and AW would find out about this and inform MC.</p> <p>NH (Oxfordshire) felt the work in the areas was encouraging but accepted that the work would take a while to start taking effect and counties should allow time for this to develop. He asked where the new Pathway Development Centres (PDCs) would sit within TTE. AW (Head of TT Development) confirmed that the PDCs would sit with talent, supported by Gavin Evans and Emma Vickers. The role of the Area Managers was to support grass roots activity.</p> <p>SF (Avon) had raised several points within his paper about the TTE Communications, specifically around the governance of Article and Regulation changes and the governance of the Area Network. In addition to the additional reporting that will take place on the website and in Over the Net for the Network, the index of Article and Regulation changes were updated on the website on a regular basis.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that not many members would want to be notified when governance issues were updated on the website but it was agreed that the Council would be provided with the updates sent to the Governance &amp; Risk Committee.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Inform where previous region monies have gone.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Governance updates provided at the Committee meeting to be sent to NC at the next meeting</p>	<p>AW</p> <p>JKB</p>	<p>November 2023</p> <p>Quarterly</p>



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<p>9</p>	<p><b>Table Tennis England membership</b></p> <p>Three papers had been received about Membership. DE (Hertfordshire) was requesting information from other Counties about their league membership and how they might be combatting the drop in affiliation. Members present explained their current situation and all counties were urged to read DE’s paper and send answers to the questions on the second page to DE at his personal email address: <a href="mailto:david.edwards363@btinternet.com">david.edwards363@btinternet.com</a>. The results of all the answers would be compiled together and then provided to the NC and the Development Team.</p> <p>EW (Warwickshire) had produced a paper to assist with membership for TTE, especially around turning informal play into affiliation of some kind. The points were noted and it was suggested that AW (Head of Table Tennis Development) should review the recommendations within the paper and discuss with EW.</p> <p>JH (Berkshire) had written a paper about the reduction of TTE members, especially since Covid. He urged TTE to bring forward a new membership package as soon as possible. JKB updated the meeting that the new membership scheme was moving as fast as possible. A requirement for IT technical support had been approved by the Board at its recent meeting, which would help to move this work forward faster.</p> <p>NLM (Kent – in the Chair) and AR (Cleveland) described a verbal proposal relayed by AC (Chief Executive) to AR (Cleveland) from the TTE Board to change the format of National Council meetings. It was proposed that the National Council should be responsible for preparing its own agenda, sending out of papers, and holding the meeting. TTE would join for one part of the meeting, where the work of the organisation could be discussed and the majority of the meeting for NC members only. It was important that the relationship between Board and National Council should remain close.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> Counties to send in their responses to DE’s paper direct to DE. Answers to be compiled together by DE and shared with NC and Development Team</p> <p><b>Action:</b> AW to review the recommendations within EW’s paper and discuss with EW</p> <p><b>Action:</b> A proposal to be sent to the NC Select</p>	<p>All DE</p> <p>AW</p>	<p>November 2023</p> <p>November / December 2023</p>
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	<p>It was agreed that AC (Chief Executive) would be asked to put forward a formal proposal to the National Council Select Committee for it to consider ahead of the next meeting in January 2024, where a full discussion could be held.</p> <p>AR to meet with AC.</p>	Committee to consider	AC/AR	November 2023
10	<p><b>Reports</b></p> <p><b>a. TTE Chair</b></p> <p>The Chair's Report was noted and there were no questions.</p> <p><b>b. CEO Report (including Management Report to the Board, CEO Updates)</b></p> <p>MC (Worcestershire) asked whether TTE monies spent on the Major Events work and the bid to host the World Championships would be reimbursed by the NewCo and this was confirmed.</p> <p>AR (Cleveland) reminded the meeting of the request to the Select Committee to review the voting of the membership. The Select Committee had looked at this and recommended that Premier Clubs could be given voting rights. AR asked for this to be looked at again. JKB (Head of Governance) explained that the newly set up Articles Working Group would be looking at the voting structure within its remit and the paper provided by the Select Committee would be considered. An update from the Articles Working Group would be brought back to the next National Council in January 2024.</p> <p>AR (Cleveland) spoke about the outstanding issue that was raised at the AGM about the appointment of a new TTE Chair. Further discussion was held on the merits of a person with a table tennis background. However, several members present felt that the best person for the role should be appointed, whether they were from table tennis or not. It was recognised that</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> An update from the Articles Working Group to be given to the next National Council Meeting</p>	JKB	January 2024

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	<p>an external candidate could bring new dimension to the role and the pool would be very limited if a table tennis background was an essential rather than a desirable.</p> <p><b>c. MAG Report</b></p> <p>It was recognised that the review of the Committee structure, to include more volunteers into the advisory committees to the Board, would have implications for the Members Advisory Group. The MAG was currently on hold until the Board makes a decision about its future role and NH (Oxfordshire) would welcome early clarification from the Board.</p> <p><b>d. Finance Report</b></p> <p>MC (Worcestershire) congratulated the Finance team on a successful move of the finance system from Jockey Club Services (JCS) to Netsuite. MC (Worcestershire) had several questions on the report and it was agreed that he would provide these to TTE so that Sam Garey (Head of Finance and IT) could answer them all, together with those raised by TC (Sussex). The questions and responses would be circulated as soon as possible after the meeting.</p> <p>There were no other reports.</p>	<p><b>Action:</b> List of finance report question to be answered and circulated</p>	<p>Sam Garey</p>	<p>November 2023</p>
	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 The National Council extended its sympathies and understanding to AC (Chief Executive) for his personal recent loss.</li> <li>2 JR (Yorkshire) explained that April 2024 marked the Centenary of Yorkshire Table Tennis. Members were asked to send any information or memorabilia to Richard Scruton.</li> </ol>			

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	3 NS (Wiltshire) asked about progress on a Table Tennis Performance Centre and felt that a 16-table site could be provided next to the current Badminton Centre site.			
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The meeting closed at 3.58 pm

Action	Owner	Timeline
New process for a Chair of National Council to be started	Caroline Williams	ASAP
SO 2 to be updated with the amendments listed	JKB	November 2023
SO 19 to be updated with the amendments listed	JKB	November 2023
RV to take the issue of JBL over 3 weekends to the next Competition Committee	RV	Next Competition Committee meeting
Inform where previous regional monies have gone.	AW to inform MC	November 2023
Governance updates provided at the Committee meeting to be sent to NC at the next meeting	JKB	Quarterly
Counties to send in their responses to DE's paper. Answers to be compiled together and shared with Development Team	All/DE	November 2023
AW to review the recommendations within EW's paper and discuss with EW	AW	November/December 2023
A proposal on the TTE/NC layout of meetings to be sent to the NC Select Committee to review ahead of next meeting	AC/AR	November 2023
An update from the Articles Working Group to be given to the next National Council Meeting	JKB	January 2024
List of finance report question to be answered and circulated	Sam Garey	November 2023