

Select Committee on the Constitution Report to National Council
28th June 2025

The Select Committee on the Constitution is made up of:

Alan Ransome OBE – Chairman
Alex Murdoch
Neil Le Milliere
Susie Venner
Estyn Williams
Tony Catt

In our report to the last National Council meeting the Select Committee on the Constitution were concerned about the manner in which rules and regulations are introduced and communicated to members and examples were given at that time. There has been further significant development in this respect in that in the last few days with changes to the membership affiliation fees published on the website 2025/26. In the documentation that was published with the Resolutions for the 2022 AGM and in the discussions in the meeting itself, procedures were agreed when the right to change the fees was passed from the membership at the AGM, to the Board.

From the documentation for the 2022 AGM meeting which were published with the Resolution to change the decision from the members to the Board, it is clear that the Board made a commitment to ensure that there was full consultation with the membership through National Council and MAG before setting the membership fees for the following year, and this would take place at of the December/January meetings. This was Special Resolution 5 at the AGM and details are attached. Without this commitment from the Board in 2022 there was a strong possibility that this Resolution would not have passed and the Associations funding from Sport England could have been in doubt.

A further commitment from the Board was provided prior to the 2022 vote and that the Board offered any fee increases to be limited to £2.00 annually unless the association faced exceptional circumstances. Please find at the end of this report the AGM documentation.

This Board commitment has clearly not been honoured by the Board and it is extremely likely that increases at treble the current inflation rate will be a subject that the membership will be concerned about. Council should have been given the option to consider and discuss these increases at meetings prior to the Resolution being considered by the Board.

We would also like to draw attention of Council to Principle 3 of the Code for Sports Governance on this issue:

“Principle 3 Communication

“Organisations shall be transparent and accountable, engaging effectively with stakeholders and nurturing internal democracy.

“Why is this important?

“Being responsive to stakeholders, understanding their interests and hearing their voices helps shape the organisation’s governance and strategy. Transparency about why the organisation exists, what it is trying to do, how it is doing it, with what results and in an accessible way empowers stakeholders by giving them the information about the organisation that they need to know.”

Memorandum of Understanding

As reported to the March meeting, good progress has been made with the discussions on Memorandum of Understanding and significant advantages to National Council have been achieved as was reported in March. It was felt at the last meeting that a Memorandum of Understanding may not be necessary but what is important is to restore the level of information that was being supplied to Council in advance of each Council meeting so Councillors were better prepared for the meeting.

At this point this information has not been provided for the June so far including the report from the Chief Executive and from other senior staff. In addition to this there have been two more Board meetings since the last National Council meeting and no minutes from with of these have been made available at this time.

Standing Orders

The majority of issues relating to Standing Orders were agreed with the representatives of the Board last year and only needed to be finalised. This was discussed at the last meeting and final proposals have now been reviewed and circulated for our June meeting to be approved, which recognise the changes that have been achieved.

Good Standing

Another item raised by the Committee at the last meeting was the fact that the good standing arrangements had been abandoned by the Association and as a result of this a large amount of the table tennis competitions programme was now taking place outside the umbrella of Table Tennis England. This is continuing and is in fact accelerating so far as we are aware. The VETTS Society and the BUCS universities are continuing to hold their competitions outside the previous good standing arrangements and without any direct link into Table Tennis England. A number of other organisation are organising competitions for some players who are members and others are not members of Table Tennis England. The ones that the Committee are aware of are organised by Matchplay, Simon Morgan; TT365, Steve Pound. Up to now it does not appear that there has been any action taken by the Association to try to regain the control. It is not just a loss of control and management of the competition programme which is suffering as a result of this, we now have at least three different ranking lists, a completely separate VETTS ranking lists and ranking lists from some of the other organisations. This is diluting the effect of the national ranking list. In addition to this we have events which our members would be interested in entering which are not appearing on the official Table Tennis England calendar, so that members who might like to play in some of these other events may not be aware of them if they are only following the TTE official calendar. The Association as previously always had control over these important aspects of the Associations activities and the Committee feel dealing with this is well overdue and needs to be addressed.

Table Tennis England AGM – 9th July 2025

It has been advised to all members that the AGM for the first time will take place on Wednesday evening at 6:00pm. It is not just the movement of the Wednesday evening, the Committee would like to give consideration to returning to a physical hybrid meeting and not just online and this would mean returning to a Saturday.

The Board held a consultation with members on this but just simply asked the question, 'Would they prefer a Wednesday evening or a Saturday?' However, this did not give the opportunity that has always been afforded in the past for a debate on this at the AGM or at National Council, where wider views from the membership on this subject could be discussed. This would give members the opportunity to give more detailed consideration to all of the factors surrounding a change that has altered the procedures of the Association that have been in place for 100 years.

From the information received so far, the agenda for the meeting is significantly lighter than has been the case in the past due to the lack of Resolutions.

The Committee request that the annual report is given adequate time for full consideration at the meeting and that the previous methods of allowing each section to be fully considered and questions asked.

The Committee also believe that the movement to a Wednesday evening and only being online is not in the best interests of the Association or the membership, and as previously discussed this should be considered for the AGM in 2026.

Future Select Committees

In a recent document supplied to Council by Tony Catt, some amendments to the arrangements of Select Committees have been included. It is generally felt that the Select Committees in place at the moment have had a positive effect on the work of National Council and has been a benefit to the Association.

The suggestion from Mr. Catt that there should be more Select Committees or working groups to work in conjunction with the Level 1 Board Committees is a positive one, however, it would take commitment from National Councillors to first of all recruit a Chairman who would take on the role of managing the Committee, and members with the right level of experience to make this project worthwhile.

The word Select was carefully chosen to identify that members of the Committee would be National Councillors who would be selected due to the fact that they have significant experience in the work being covered by that particular committee, plus some National Councillors who have specialist knowledge so that the advice provided would be on a strong and solid basis.

Alan Ransome
Chairman
Select Committee on the Constitution



Ordinary Resolution:	No
Special Resolution 5:	Yes
Change to:	Remove Article 34.3
Company Member Proposer:	Board
League / County:	
TT ID / Membership Number: (required)	
<p>Rationale: (not more than 250 words)</p> <p>Article 34.3 states 'Affiliation fees shall be set only at a General Meeting'.</p> <p>Consequently, Table Tennis England is not compliant with the Code of Sports Governance (the Code).</p> <p>The Code is very clear that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Board is the ultimate decision maker.▪ Members of the organisation, also have an important role to play in governance, and the requirement that the Board has ultimate authority does not override or supersede the powers of such Members.▪ Matters Reserved for the Board for decision would, among other things, typically include the annual budget. <p>Given that affiliation fees are a significant part of Table Tennis England's self-generated income, it would be expected under the Code that the Board determine such fees to ensure it is financially best placed to deliver its obligations.</p> <p>We understand this is a change for the membership but to ensure we are Code compliant and do not place our £11 million of public funding at risk, this Article change is required.</p> <p>However, to ensure transparency, and open dialogue, the Board commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Ensure consultation with the membership through National Council and MAG in the setting of membership fees for the following year; this will take place earlier in the process - December/January meetings▪ A long term plan that limits the increase of fees to no more than £2 annually over a 5 year period (to 2027/28), save that the Board has the ability to review should the organisation be faced with exceptional circumstances <p>Note: If this resolution is accepted the fees determined by the AGM earlier in the meeting will apply for membership year 2022/23 and the current proposal will first be used for the 2023/24 membership year.</p> <p>Signed:</p> <p>Dated:</p>	