

Discussion Paper regarding National Council Meetings

Although I have only been a member of National Council since the beginning of the 2023/24 season, it has given me the opportunity to review how the meetings are functioning and what is the best way to move forward as such.

It is apparent that attendance towards meetings is low compared to the number of councillors and there are several empty spaces for counties according to the TTE register. As such, I believe we need to review how meetings take place and also look at discussions with counties over attendance.

Meeting Format

The current system regarding Hybrid meetings with a fully online meeting during the winter does not appear to be working given the physical attendance at the meetings is usually less than 10 and at the last one in April was only 3 of us excluding Table Tennis England staff.

Prior to Covid, National Council meetings were held physically and the discussions that took place were more formal and fluid due to the nature of the format and side discussions could be held as necessary.

I have held discussions with Jo (TTE Head of Governance) regarding funding for meetings to try and make the meetings run smoother and more effectively and the recommendation that I came up with were as follows:

- Change hybrid meetings to fully online ones – This reduces the cost to TTE and to individuals for travelling. It also enables a more logical and smooth meeting as everyone is on the same format and we are not going from a question in the room to a question online etc.
- Re-introduce one meeting a year held physically – This meeting would be proposed to be the one immediately before the AGM so that National Councillors had the opportunity to review the propositions and discuss as a group with the board members as necessary to be able to produce a conclusion or answer any queries which they themselves had.

National Councillor Attendance

Currently (19 June 2024), there are 2 vacancies on National Council and I understand there is at least one current councillor who is retiring at the end of the year. There are also at least five councillors who have not attended meetings during the year which means that approximately 20% of counties are not being represented correctly on council.

My question therefore is how we can improve the attendance and contribution to council – I would also like to know if counties are aware that people do not attend despite being their National Councillor?

On a league level in Yorkshire, we send out a report each year to the league secretaries confirming how many times their league representative attended a committee meeting, is this something we need to consider to bring people back to attending council and contributing towards the good of the sport and the necessary governance.

These are only my ideas and recommendations and therefore happy to have a debate regarding this about the best format and attendance for National Council meetings in the future.