

## **Introduction**

1. Since the last National Council meeting one Board meeting has taken place which was on the 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> December in Preston. This coincided with the England v Germany (women) ECQ match which the Board attended.
2. The Board were very pleased to have Jill Parker attend.

## **Regular Updates**

3. **Chairman's update** – Sandra welcomed everyone and commented on the excellent Regional club and volunteer conference she had attended recently in Durham. The sharing of best practice and dissemination of information proved that the pilot was a success and confirmed that the next pilot would be held in the East Midlands in February. Following the two pilots, feedback will be reviewed, assessed and plans made for a full roll out.
4. **CEO report** – Sara expressed her disappointment that UK Sport would not be funding Table Tennis England/BTTF for the Tokyo cycle. The good news was that Table Tennis had been reclassified as a 'Band 4' sport (i.e. medal potential) from Band 5 (i.e. emerging sport) based on the recent success and future plans/prospects, but unfortunately none of the Band 4 sports received any funding. A joint appeal was being looked at by the Band 4 sports.  
Discussion around moving to the existing National Badminton Centre were continuing, however based on the costs and space available the move would be put on hold but kept under constant review.  
Discussions with ESTTA around a merger were proceeding well with the good news that John Arnold would continue to be involved.  
A discussion was held around the recent child abuse cases coming to light in football, it was agreed that was not good for sport as a whole. Table Tennis England's processes around child safety are reviewed annually by CPSU and we have a green rating but it was agreed that they would be further reviewed in light of historic cases.
5. **Head of Operations report** – Key reports were provided in respect of finance, governance, risk, safeguarding and ethics and complaints. The budget continued to be monitored carefully, income against forecast was on target whilst expenditure was not as fast as forecast, the key reason being the delay in claims against capital. There was a lot to discuss in governance due to the new Code of Governance being published and this was covered in a later paper.
6. **National Council Update** – A full report of the last National Council meeting was provided describing the new way of working and the positive responses to the afternoon session. The Board was then provided with the outputs of the meeting i.e. the bullet points from each table. A document (Appendix 1) has been created describing actions points, if any, against the bullet points. It was felt however that some of the actions could be taken forward by National Councillors to implement in their own areas as best practice was being shared i.e. learning and implementation of a 2 person league. It was also suggested that perhaps as well as bullet points, each table could have a scribe to write up what was discussed at the table.

## **Dashboard and Decision papers**

7. **Dashboard/Operation Plan** – An update of the Dashboard was provided. The Dashboard forms the operation plan to deliver the strategy, whilst the strategy still remains relevant and a focus for 2025 and ongoing work, it may require re-prioritisation due to the change in the Government and Sport England’s strategies.
8. **A Code for Sporting Governance** – The Code was adopted by the Board. A working group of SD, SH, MS, TVP, SS was established supported by JB to work through the detail.
9. **Director Nominations Committee** – With several Non-Executive Directors initial tenure coming up and also in line with the new Code for Governance it was agreed a nominations committee would be created with the terms of reference in the paper agreed.
10. **Umpires Uniform** – Following debate it was agreed that further consultation would take place before implementing any change to the current uniform.

## Papers for Discussion

11. **National Championships – Prize V Entry fee.** One of the key outcomes from the competition review was that events should break even. The cost of both the entry and the prizes should be reviewed and the cost of entry should not be the sole focus around reviewing costs. A healthy debate took place about prize money versus prestige of winning the National Championships. It was agreed to maintain the status quo of entry fees and prize money for the 2016 Senior National Championships and to keep various options under review. There will be no prize for Junior, Cadet or age group National Championships.
12. **Ranking** – Feedback was received from the Ranking Review Group. The value of ranking is twofold, it encourages participation and provides an indication of form at the top level for selection purposes. The question was should one list be produced throughout the country, including leagues players or should there be two lists or a hybrid of the two options. It had to encourage participation but not reward playing in lots of tournaments to gain easy points. There was also the issue of including different age groups in one list, but possibly they could be segmented out. Two actions came out of the discussion:-
  - a. Once a clear strategy had been decided then members should be directly consulted.
  - b. Providers should be identified and consulted to see what they were doing and any possible solutions
13. **Affiliation Fees** – A paper was provided providing a recommendation of a £2 increase should be put to National Council and the reasons for this increase. This was agreed.
14. The day finished with a presentation from Tim Yarnall from Two Circles

## DAY 2

15. **AGM** – It was felt that the AGM needed to be refreshed. The articles were looked at and the purpose of the AGM was reviewed. Looking at the articles the AGM needs to consist of:-
  - Presentation of the accounts (Income and Expenditure and Balance Sheet) and reports
  - Appointment of Auditors
  - Resolutions, Special Resolutions and Amendments
  - Affiliations Fees

The Board therefore agreed that the day of the AGM would be split into two parts –(i) an Annual Conference and then (ii) the AGM.

Proposed schedule:

11.00- 13.00 Annual Conference

13.00-14.00 Lunch  
14.00 – 15.00 AGM  
15.00 -16.00 Awards

Unfortunately this would mean that there would not be time for National Council in the morning but it was felt that the wider membership would benefit.

16. **Sport England 2017-2021 Submission** – The draft submission had been circulated previously and input provided. Each section was discussed, asked how it linked to the current strategy, with further suggestions made to help make the case to Sport England. The Board were encouraged by the submission as it focused on the core of the sport, clubs, workforce, talent, leagues and also that Sport England had acknowledged the impact Table Tennis could have on the mass population and that there were indications that PING! and Loop would continue to be funded.

The next meeting would take place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March in Nottingham at the National Championships

Response to National Council Comments made at November meeting

[Note – the left hand column contains the bullet points from the tables at National Council, the right hand side is a summary of follow up action]

<p><b>IS THERE A BETTER PRICING/CHARGING STRUCTURE THAT CAN BE DELIVERED WITHIN THE SPORT?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of GP costs to Students</li> <li>• GP additional Costs e.g. admin equipment/all players/Player License/Player Membership</li> <li>• The more you pay the more you play</li> <li>• Boost membership, to boost sponsorship:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ ESTTA</li> <li>○ Schools and young people</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All fees are reviewed on an annual basis and this be considered next season</li> <li>• This is being re-considered in line with the annual review, this is a question that is considered and Malcom Macfarlane has written a paper which has been considered.</li> <li>• There are ongoing discussion with ESTTA and links to schools. We are also speaking to OIGS to bring them closer to the organization and increase membership.</li> </ul>
<p><b>HOW DO WE GET MORE WOMEN/GIRLS INTO THE SPORT?</b></p> <p><b>Obtain and utilise insight on girls and women</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Girls are more sociable so makes the games fun based</li> <li>• Girls are less competitive than boys, so they will need a different style of table tennis.</li> <li>• How to keep them/retention</li> <li>• How to play to their interests?</li> <li>• Make the game fun and less competitive EG UV, glow sticks and playing music</li> <li>• Find out why women don't play sports in women groups e.g. 'mumsnet'</li> </ul>	<p><b>Actions :</b></p> <p><b>We have obtained and shared insight on girls and women</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from council shared with relevant national staff to consider when shaping programmes</li> <li>• Female insight included in regional conference session</li> <li>• Following extended insight and pilots considering production of a guide/serious of case studies on getting girls into table tennis (method TBC dependent on findings)</li> </ul>

**Use targeted initiatives**

- Sessions in schools for girls only/girls only tables
- There isn't enough in primary schools
- Generally ball sports are initially 'boy-focused'
- Need the right volunteers to run women only sessions
- 30 years ago there were women's leagues – what happened to them? Positive, successful female role model in table tennis
- Social side at work, demise of sports and social clubs
- Introduce table tennis to existing sporty women e.g. hockey, netball
- Keep fit – women are into 'keep-fit' non-competitive activity e.g. Zumba, spinning classes, fitbit, steps etc.
- How can table tennis capitalise on it and link to it? E.g. 1 hour of table tennis
- Mother and baby groups
- Coffee mornings
- Clubs have 'female ambassador'
- Teach parents so they can help support and be involved

**Use targeted and relevant marketing**

- 'This Girl Can' campaign – creates desire to take part
- Technically a difficult sport, but playable
- Word of mouth
- Involve mothers of children who play
- Links to other women's clubs e.g. golf section, football and tennis
- Colleges & University

**We have implemented targeted initiatives**

- PremierClub projects targeting females supported through our Club Support Scheme – will promote these as case studies once reporting received
- Female only projects supported and a priority in this year's satellite clubs programme
- Female targeted pilots included in our 2017 Jack Petchey Foundation grant application
- Premier League 4 Sport girls inspiration event pilot planned for 25<sup>th</sup> February 2017
- Table Tennis League insight analysed trends in female participation and next steps being agreed

**We have used targeted and relevant marketing**

- All programmes targeted at females or males and females use appropriate marketing images taking into consideration female values
- Female role models used to promote specific initiatives, eg Kelly Sibley secured to support PL4S girls event

<p><b>HOW CAN THE CLUB STRUCTURE BE STRENGTHENED?</b></p> <p><b>Ensure a clear vision and strategy for clubs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision</li> <li>• Succession</li> <li>• Partnership and links</li> </ul> <p><b>Consider competition structures and links that can impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Players have to play for clubs in league structure</li> <li>• British league – home and away – promotes team and club</li> <li>• Change how clubs and leagues interact</li> </ul> <p><b>Address club support and key issues</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table tennis England to help clubs access better facilities</li> <li>• Affinity to a club</li> <li>• Signing up for primary club? Voting</li> <li>• Volunteers with passion and commitment</li> <li>• Different sizes of clubs have different objective</li> <li>• Club registration scheme</li> <li>• Widen horizons with satellite clubs – over 50s</li> <li>• Clubs need local development programmes</li> <li>• Coaching</li> <li>• Clubmark to be rolled out and promoted</li> <li>• Make it easy for players to register for clubs</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action:</b></p> <p><b>We have revisited our strategy and plans for club and ‘core market’ support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Sport England 2017-21 funding application includes development and support of volunteers, clubs, satellite clubs and leagues</li> </ul> <p><b>We have progressed a number of areas of club support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued to provide financial support through facility grants and club support grants to our clubs in 2016/17</li> <li>• Re-licenced with Sport England and re-trained our area staff to enable them to support PremierClubs in gaining Clubmark</li> <li>• Expanded and relaunched the Pride of Table Tennis Awards to recognise great volunteers and continued work on our volunteer journey</li> <li>• Considered an over 50s element linked to our new Loop in the Community programme (launching February) which could create satellite venues linked to clubs</li> </ul>
--	--

## IS THE LEAGUE STRUCTURE A BARRIER TO GROWING THE SPORT?

### League format issues

- Every league currently functions in their own ways
- Difficult rules
- Less divisions means less possibilities to diversify
- Teams playing on 2 tables – no rest which suits some and not others
- Got to have the right finish times in leagues for young players
- Schools leagues to run alongside local leagues
- Matches all on different nights – cant plan life
- Doesn't fit in with modern life currently – late finishes
- Leicester Junior League
  - 36 teams
  - Once a month
  - 18 tables

### League volunteer & player considerations

- Fear of change and losing volunteers
- Finding the right volunteers and engaging them
- Leagues – doesn't need committee meetings to run the league – encourage younger people to take on roles
- No leagues in Slough – change was suggested and rejected so they subsequently folded Junior leagues
- Currently no support of leagues

### Leagues venue & club limitations

- Venues – not often attractive enough
- 50% of teams all from one club

## Actions:

### We have explored and gained insight into league format issues

- Launched a national councillors online forum with a discussion topic of the current league structure to gain additional feedback
- Analysed extensive league and participant data to understand trends, league participant profile, strengths and challenges linked to formats

### We have included league support and volunteer support in our plans

- Included development and support of leagues in our 2017-21 plans
- Continued work on the volunteer journey and support and included in our 2017-21 plans