

# *National Council* *5<sup>th</sup> November 2016*

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**NATIONAL COUNCIL**

Minutes of the National Council Meeting held at The Mercure Hotel, The Approach, Two Mile Ash, Milton Keynes MK8 8LY, on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2016, commencing at 11:00am.

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**PRESENT:-**

**COUNCILLORS:** A Murdoch (Bedfordshire), BR Freer (Cambridgeshire), Mrs KM Tonge MBE (Cheshire, Regional Chair North West and BTTAD), AE Ransome OBE (Cleveland), Mrs DM Jermyn (Cornwall), P Goulding (Devonshire), A Thompson (Durham), P Ashleigh (Essex), LJ Smith (Gloucestershire), DB Turner (Hampshire, Regional Chair South & South East), H Jutle (Herefordshire), DJ Edwards (Hertfordshire), S Clarke (Lancashire), Mrs S Pickering (Leicestershire and Regional Chair East Midlands), M Close (Middlesex), M Allsop (Nottinghamshire), N Hurford (Oxfordshire), C Dangerfield (Shropshire), R Loxley (South Yorkshire), B Davison (Suffolk, Eastern Regional Chair), Miss M Fraser (Surrey), A Catt (Sussex), E J Williams (Warwickshire), CN Sewell (Wiltshire), MG Clark (Worcestershire), RB Hudson (Yorkshire and Yorkshire Regional Chair)

**DEPUTY NATIONAL COUNCILLORS:** Mrs S Hayes (Buckinghamshire), J Cowell (Derbyshire), C Hollingsbee (Kent), S Pound (Sussex)

**STAFF:** J Bruck (Head of Operations), Mrs E St John (Head of Development), G Yarnall (Head of Workforce), Mark Taffler (Head of Commercial), S Mills (Head of Talent & Performance) Miss A Gabb (Office Administrator/Minute taker)

**REGIONAL CHAIRMEN:** B Davison (Suffolk, Eastern Regional Chair), DB Turner (South & South East Chair), N Wheatley (West Midlands Regional Chairman), Mrs S Pickering (Leicestershire and Regional Chair East Midlands), Mrs KM Tonge MBE (Cheshire, Regional Chair North West and BTTAD),

**INVITED:** Mrs Jill Parker (President), Mrs S Deaton (Chairman), Ms S Hughes (Deputy Chairman), K Thomas (Treasurer), TV Purcell (Director), M Smith (Director and BUCS), Mrs A L Tazartes (Director), P Huggon (Director), L Reid (VETTS), Mrs KM Tonge MBE (Cheshire, Regional Chair North West and BTTAD), J Arnold (ESTTA), S Griew (Directors)

**APOLOGIES:** DL Hockney (Avon), CG Dyke (Berkshire), RJ Hedley (Buckinghamshire), LA Chatwin (Derbyshire), LT Whittaker (Dorset), N Le Milliere (Kent), GE Tyler (Lincolnshire), T Vincent (Norfolk), J Donnelly (Northumberland), I Hooper (Somerset), C Bell (Staffordshire Deputy NC), D Humble (Essex Deputy NC), Mrs S Sutcliffe (Chief Executive), A Nixon (Director), Ms K Skeggs (Director), B Chan (Yorkshire Regional Chairman), C Davison (North East Regional Chairman), K Mudge (South East), C Clemett (Rules),

**1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING**

- 1.1** Tony Catt (AC), Chairman began the meeting with a minute's silence for all of the people who had passed away since the previous meeting; Derek Sherratt, John Dignum, Ron Bolton MBE, Martin Kinsella MBE, Gerry Stokes, Ken Alvey, Fred Hayman, Terry Burroughs, Jeff Meehan and Ron Douglas.
- 1.2** It was noted that National Councilors would like to receive notifications of deaths of current National Councillors as they have done in the past.

**1.1. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Chris Dangerfield - Tabletennis365.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD 02.07.16  
7695/2/AMG**

- 2.1** Martin Clark (MGC) referred to point 5.11 regarding the voting rights review report which was promised to be circulated to National Councilors.
- 2.2** Tom Purcell (TVC) explained that a draft report was prepared to be submitted however was put on hold because of the new Sport Governance Code publication in November. He said it will be ready for the National Council meeting in January.
- 2.3** MGC noted that the draft Minutes with his suggested amendment were not initially issued until questioned.
- 2.4** MGC also noted that his queries which were sent to the Treasurer in advanced have not been distributed thus the National Councilors aren't aware of the correspondence between them. He queried how this process will be inclusively operated in future.
- 2.5** Keith Thomas (KT) said that a copy of their exchanges should have been provided to the National Councilors. AC clarified that they will be sent out with the Minutes from this meeting.

**3 MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE IN THE AGENDA**

- 3.1** Alan Ransome OBE (AER) requested an update from the Board regarding the discussion topic at the National Council meeting earlier this year.
- 3.2** Sandra Deaton (SD) clarified and said updates were in the reports and the Board summary provided to National Council.
- 3.3** AER also referred to point 6.1 in the CEOs report and asked for an updated regarding the next 4-year funding plan.
- 3.4** SD apologised for the absence of Sara Sutcliffe and answered the query on her behalf. She explained that Table Tennis England submitted a provisional plan to Sport England as part of the scoping process. Sport England have decided that all NGBs need to completely reevaluate their bids, due to being considerably 'overbid'.

Table Tennis England was provided with a Consultant to work with the Senior Leadership Team to help review the model for delivery to the 'core market' with less funding. The new draft plan needs to be submitted by 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2016 with the full bid by Christmas. Funding decision is therefore expected in early February. The level of funding will definitely be reduced from this cycle for all NGBs.

**3.5** Margot Fraser (MF) noted that the change of National Council date in January clashes with the Junior British League which was supported by AER and Chris Dangerfield (CD). It was proposed that the date is reverted to the original plan, being 28<sup>th</sup> January.

**3.6** AC confirmed the date will be decided upon later in the meeting, after reviewing the events calendar.

#### **4. REPORT BY TABLE TENNIS ENGLAND CHAIRMAN TO INCLUDE BOARD REPORT 16-2-1**

**4.1** SD welcomed any questions about her report.

**4.2** Neil Hurford (NH) noted that 91% of votes were in favour of increased affiliation fees which he said is a good example of how National Council works and that it is important to discuss matters within their leagues. Furthermore, he questioned whether the intention is to raise the affiliation fees to £20 over the next few years and if the National Councilors will have a chance to discuss this proposal.

**4.3** SD thanked all National Councillors for their support again and clarified that the 5-year figure increase has been taken to the Board however, she explained that it is not possible to put an amount on the rise, as it all depends on the next funding cycle. It has been recognised that increased affiliation fees are essential and it will be discussed with National Councillors and the Board members over the next year.

**4.4** AER congratulated SD on her election to the ITTF Board of Directors. He requested any details or changes of the new plan/process which wasn't included in the report.

**4.5** SD explained that the discussion topics included in today's meeting are vital and the resulting constructive ideas and opinions are the best way that National Council can help the Senior Leadership Team and the Board to formulate the bid.

#### **5. REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE TO INCLUDE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS 16-2-2**

**5.1** SD spoke on Sara Sutcliffe's behalf and welcomed any questions.

**5.2** Estyn Williams (EJW) commented that the updated list of National Councillors for the new season 2016/17 needs to be uploaded to the website. EJW also questioned the new Governance Code which states that a National Councillor cannot be appointed for more than 9 years, which is unfair on loyal Councillors such as Alan Ransome, who's been on Council for 50 years.

- 5.3** SD explained that we are well placed to meet the requirements of the new UK Sport Governance Code. It is mandatory to adopt it and to agree a plan to address areas of 'noncompliance'. SD said that we will require clarity of whether the new regulations are retrospective or not.
- 5.4** Alex Murdoch (AM) questioned if overall the funding will be reduced from the previous amount given over the 4-year funding cycle.
- 5.5** SD clarified that the funding will be less however the distribution method has changed, it has been split into different pots which National Governing Bodies can separately apply for.
- 5.6** AER referred to the Head of Operations report, in particular the democracy at the AGM. The motions were circulated later than they would have been in the previous years, thus the usual procedure was not followed.
- 5.7** In response, SD said that a timescale did exist and was followed however the timescale was shorter this year due to the AGM being earlier.
- 5.8** Secondly, AER referred to the Head of Performance report and said that he is concerned about the development of women in table tennis.
- 5.9** Simon Mills (SM) agreed that the women's teams are not performing at the level we would like however ultimately we are doing the best we can with the standards they are at. SM explained that currently we are working with the University of Nottingham to develop a program for women in that area.
- 5.10** Steve Pound (SP) added that if it wasn't for the three top male players, Table Tennis England would be failing as an organisation thus the system needs to be addressed.
- 5.11** SM disagreed with SP as there are a number of good players coming up through the Talent Pathway, however they are currently at a very young age.
- 5.12** AER referred to the Head of Commercial report, and highlighted the success of the England vs Greece match however said he was disappointed about the lack of staff attendance of the Junior British League. Mark Taffler (MT) acknowledged these comments and took the feedback on board.
- 5.13** MGC referred to the Head of Operations report and questioned page 4 where it states two regulations have been amended. MGC said that he hasn't received a notification about this and questioned whether they will be circulated.
- 5.14** Jonathan Bruck (JB) explained that the regulations were sent to General Secretaries, are on the website and can be read about in his report however will be re-distributed accordingly.

- 5.15** Secondly, MGC questioned why the forecast, break down and any discrepancies for the year were not included in the Finance report as previously requested.
- 5.16** KT explained that there is a new Finance system in place which provides a lot of detail but is produced in summary format for the report. The system is used by the Board and the Finance Operation and Risk Group (FORG) to review budgets.
- 5.17** JB added that the format was revised and it was intended to be more relevant and simple for the National Councillors, to enable them to understand where the funding has been allocated and spent.
- 5.18** John Arnold (JA) referred to the Head of Development report and questioned if the children and young people funding pot will include schools in the bid.
- 5.19** SD confirmed that Sport England would like to see non-curricular table tennis activity, such as breakfast, lunch time and after school clubs.

## **6. DISCUSSION GROUPS**

Due to the overrun of the first half of the day, there was only time for one discussion session to take place.

### **6.1 IS THERE A BETTER PRICING/CHARGING STRUCTURE THAT CAN BE DELIVERED WITHIN THE SPORT?**

Table 1

- Reduction of GP costs to Students
- GP additional Costs e.g. admin equipment/all players/Player License/Player Membership
- The more you pay the more you play
- Boost membership, to boost sponsorship:
  - ESTTA
  - Schools and young people

### **6.2 HOW DO WE GET MORE WOMEN/GIRLS INTO THE SPORT?**

Table 2

- Sessions in schools for girls only/girls only tables
- Girls are more sociable so makes the games fun based
- 'This Girl Can' campaign – creates desire to take part
- Girls are less competitive than boys, so they will need a different style of table tennis.
- How to keep them/retention
- There isn't enough in primary schools

- Generally ball sports are initially 'boy-focused'
- How to play to their interests?
- Make the game fun and less competitive EG UV, glow sticks and playing music
- 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
- Find out why women don't play sports in women groups e.g. 'Mumsnet'
- 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
- Technically a difficult sport, but playable
- Involve mothers of children who play
- Clubs have 'female ambassador'
- Word of mouth
- Mother and baby groups
- Coffee mornings
- Links to other women's clubs e.g. golf section, football and tennis
- Colleges
- University
- Aerobics/keep fit classes
- Teach parents so they can help support and be involved

### 6.3 HOW CAN THE CLUB STRUCTURE BE STRENGTHENED?

Table 3

- Vision
- Succession
- Partnership and links
- Players have to play for clubs in league structure
- Affinity to a club
- Signing up for primary club? Voting
- Volunteers with passion and commitment
- Different sizes of clubs have different objective
- Table tennis England to help clubs access better facilities
- Club registration scheme
- British league – home and away – promotes team and club
- Widen horizons with satellite clubs – over 50s
- Clubs need local development programmes
- Coaching
- Change how clubs and leagues interact
- Clubmark to be rolled out and promoted
- Make it easy for players to register for clubs

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

Table 4

##### Leagues

- Venues – not often attractive enough
- Every league currently functions in their own ways
- Difficult rules
- Fear of change and losing volunteers
- Leicester Junior League
  - 36 teams
  - Once a month
  - 18 tables
- 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
- No leagues in Slough – change was suggested and rejected so they subsequently folded
- Junior leagues
- Matches all on different nights – cant plan life
- Doesn't fit in with modern life currently – late finishes
- Finding the right volunteers
- Leagues – doesn't need committee meetings to run the league – encourage younger people to take on roles
- Currently no support of leagues
- 50% of teams all from one club
- Find a way of engaging volunteers

#### **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 7.1** A vote was held regarding the date of the January meeting. As a result, it was decided that the meeting will be moved from the 21st to the 28th January. Estyn Williams will be taking the chair on Tony Catt's behalf, As the Chairman Tony Catt, will be unable to attend.
- 7.2** Noel Sewell noted that it is a great shame John Burtenshaw had resigned from his positions within Table Tennis England, he had a big background in table tennis and his hard work has been appreciated over the years.
- 7.3** Neil Hurford also recognised the great job the Chairman, Tony Catt, does for every National Council meeting. He acknowledged that it is a difficult job, however done very well.



**8. The following papers were circulated but were not for discussion**

- i. Written report by England Schools Table Tennis Association (JA)
- ii. Written report by British Table Tennis Association for Disabled (KMT)
- iii. Written report by Veterans England Table Tennis Society (AM)

**9. AC called the meeting to a close at 15:40pm.**

**DATE AND LOCATION OF THE NEXT MEETING**

28<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at The Mercure Milton Keynes Abbey Hill, The Approach, Two Mile Ash, Milton Keynes, MK8 8LY