

## National Council Meeting

### Department Update: CEO

For Information

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Author: Sara Sutcliffe

### Introduction

1. This report covers the last three months of activity.
2. Attached to this report you will find departmental reports covering current activity, future activity and some of the challenges that the staff are facing in delivery of their programmes. This format was well received at the last National Council as it is important to understand the constraints as well as the positive progress.

### Executive Report

3. The Centenary Working Group is getting underway in its planning for the 21/2 season. the four strands of working that are the current focus are: (i) **Heritage** – retaining, indexing and digitising the archives. This will include a campaign to obtain more archive material and consider how to make it more accessible. Archives Committee will be involved in this work. A Hall of Fame is under consideration. (ii) **Fundraising** – we will organise a fundraising campaign which we hope will bolster our existing funds (Ivor Montague for talent and Tom Blunn for officials) as well as launching a new Centenary Fund for future club/league support, (iii) **Gala Dinner/Exhibition Match** – a true celebration and (iv) **Coffee Table book** – work has begun (group Colin Clemett, Diane Webb, Paul Stimpson). We will also devise a centenary logo which will be used across the business that season and hopefully we will rebrand a number of events as ‘Centenary’ events. The Working Group has meet at the National Championships and will meet again in July.
4. Much time is also focusing on the ITTF’s centenary celebrations in 2026. I continue to be involved in meetings and feasibility studies with Deloitte, UK Sport, the GLA and the ITTF.
5. We are delighted to partner with Mark Bates Ltd for the next 5 years. After a successful launch at the Mark Bates Ltd National Championships we will focus now on the marketing campaign to encourage members and other contacts to consider purchasing Mark Bates Ltd insurance policies as the association will receive financial commission for all those policies sold, providing a longer term on going revenue stream.
6. The COVID-19 coronavirus has caused disruption to table tennis. Internationally many events have been cancelled or affected through withdrawals. Domestically I have been liaising with other NGBs and government department whose advise remains to follow official government advice. Obviously, we will continue to monitor on a day by day basis and should we need to make decisions about our domestic events we will notify everyone concerned directly and also placed a notification on the website.
7. The Board has been working on updating the Mission 2025 strategy as we are 5 years into the 10-year strategy. It is an iteration not a revolution. A draft of the revised version will be sent to National Council and the MAG before it is published.
8. Counties currently receive a 10% rebate of Player Licences. This is not set in any regulation but has been the practice since the introduction of individual membership. In 2015 National Council agreed that the 10% rebate for Premier Clubs would cease and the money be retained in the club development budget. The Board and Finance Committee have looked now at the Player Licence rebate. National Council are asked to

acknowledge that this amount of money (c £6000 split across all the counties) could be put towards supporting a central budget that would benefit all licensed players. We propose that this money could be used to enhance the officiating budget to ensure we continue to train, recruit and support more officials for the wider benefit of the sport. It is proposed to reduce the rebate to 5% for 20/21 and then to cease the practise.

9. Over the last year we have conducted a review of membership categories. As I have said many times, we want to bring more of the regular players into the NGB fold, not just those that take part in local league or national competitions. According to Active Lives (Sport England research) 425,000 people regularly take part in table tennis. We have just over 25,000 player members. At the same time, we want to create a compelling case for the more social players to connect with us so that we can help guide them on their table tennis journey including providing a pathway to clubs and leagues if that is what they want to do. We will present the proposed new membership structure (which builds on the existing one) and the associated affiliation fee proposal at the meeting.
10. I look forward to seeing you on the 14<sup>th</sup> and engaging in the workshop session about Children and Young people. You will see in Greg's report the success of TT Kidz which is entering its second phase. We know from Sport England research that the most important element of a young person starting in a new sport of fun and engagement. However, we know that cadet and junior membership (the more competitive end of the sport) is static at best and we continue to see the usual churn pattern of as many joining each year to replace those leaving. The more we can collectively tackle this issue the stronger the sport will become as we head into the next 100 years of English Table Tennis.

Sara Sutcliffe

## **National Council Meeting**

### **Department Update: Operations & Governance**

**For Information**

**Date: 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

**Author: Joanna Keay-Blyth**

#### **Information/Activities - Last Period**

**Board** – Inductions were undertaken with the new Elected Directors, who also took part in their first Board Meeting in January.

Tenders went out to undertake a Board Evaluation as per the Governance Action Plan and 6 tenders were submitted, which are currently being reviewed.

#### **TT Membership**

**Annual Returns Spreadsheet** – Data from the annual returns has been collated in to a year on year comparison and can be found in Appendix 1. There is a negative variance of 1,397 against last year but there are 3,333 on annual returns that have not been submitted this year against last year.

**Membership Review** - We undertook a membership review during this period looking at our different markets and offering and a paper has been submitted to Board for approval.

**TT Leagues** – Continues to develop with the focus on ironing out some of the bugs

#### **Information/Activities – Current/Future**

**TT Memberships** – The development of the Tournament entry system will hopefully be trialled over the next quarter, which will allow on line entry to our competitions.

**TT Leagues** – Future development of the system will focus on archiving of the current season and preparation for the new season, we are piloting the system for the County Championships Over 60's and NJL, we are also looking at improvements to the App.

**Archiving** – We are looking forward to the Centenary and reviewing our archiving arrangements and how we digitise them for the future.

#### **Challenges/Issues**

1. Data cleansing from the previous system to ensure it is a true reflection of clubs and leagues, this work will be ongoing as Annual returns are received to try and ensure the process can be automated in future years
2. Ranking – issues being resolved as they occur but adds significant workload to the team in data entry and the late receipt of results compounds the situation.

## Actions from National Council Meeting 14<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Action Number	Assigned	Action Description	Progress
1	Jo Keay-Blyth	U3A contact details to be distributed - Tony Shapps - <a href="mailto:tonyshapps@gmail.com">tonyshapps@gmail.com</a>	Complete as per Action
2	G Yarnell	Why do new umpires have to pay for their own courses?	Complete as below These courses are charged at a small fee for the following reasons: 1. To help cover the costs of the course (tutor expenses, venue hire etc) to enable us to keep putting back into the development of the course and officiating itself 2. To help ensure the course is valued and individuals have made a full commitment to attend. When the course is free of charge, we often find we get a lot of drop outs at the last minute.
3	Jo Keay-Blyth	Working Group D on centenary to be added to minutes once received by J Skinner	Complete
4	Jo Keay-Blyth	Collate league data from annual returns	Complete as per Appendix 1
5	Board	It was requested that when a member of the Board visited a County could the NC for that county and local league be informed	Complete - Information disseminated
6	G Yarnell	Link to Military to be pursued further	Ongoing - Meeting held with the RAF, who also plays local league table tennis, to explore stronger links across the military services. We are looking at our membership offers currently and will be taking the military services views on board to ensure we create an offer that is right for these individuals to engage with Table Tennis England.
7	Jo Keay-Blyth	Look at further summary on the impact of Will Bailey	Summary info in Marketing Report - Complete
8	Board	Decision on next meeting dates	Complete

9	Jo Keay-Blyth	Contact List for National Councillors to be collated including Next of Kin details	Complete and in progress
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### **In Memoriam**

Derek Schofield – Honourary Life Member, Vice President, Mike Watts Award – Most Improved Player  
Brian Lamerton – Vice President

## National Council Meeting

### Department Update: Performance

For Information

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Author: Simon Mills

### Information/Activities - Last Period

- Olympic Team Qualification: The GB mens team failed in their bid to reach a successive Olympic Games Team competition. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/featured-news/gb-mens-olympic-team-dreams-are-over/> <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/liam-and-paul-now-single-minded-on-road-to-tokyo/>
- GB Womens team also failed to reach the team event; <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/gb-womens-olympic-dreams-are-over/>
- Liam Pitchford reached the semi final of the Hungarian World Tour event <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/superb-pitchford-into-semi-finals/> <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/confident-pitchford-storms-into-quarters/>
- Players reach Quarter Finals in Sweden <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/green-and-piwowar-the-pick-of-the-pack-in-sweden/>
- Jasmine Wong wins medal in Sweden with Anna Hursey <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/medal-for-british-pair-wong-and-hursey-in-sweden/>
- Two athlete places in Olympic Ambition programme <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/olympic-ambition-programme-opens/>
- Next seasons squad applications are now open; <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/applications-open-for-england-age-group-squads/>
- Paul Drinkhall reaches the quarter final of the Portugese Challenge Plus event <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/drinkhall-into-last-16-in-portugal/>
- Tom Jarvis and David McBeath pair up to reach main draw in mens doubles in Portugal <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/jarvis-and-mcbeath-look-confident-in-portugal/>
- Liam Pitchford reached the quarter finals of the European Top 16 <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pitchford-sets-up-boll-tie-at-top-16/>
- Sam Walker and Liam Pitchford tell their stories in a new podcast series; <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/podcast-pitchford-walker-talk-mental-health-well-being/>
- Craig Bryant appointed to lead womens team at World Championships; <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/coach-craig-to-lead-womens-squad-for-worlds/>

### Information/Activities – Current/Future

- UK Sport funding application submitted for phase one.
- World Tour events and World Championships events are being postponed and potentially cancelled by Corona Virus; <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/world-championships-postponed/>
- Liam, Paul and Sam will continue the podcast series with the second one due out in March focusing on managing complex lifestyle of an elite athlete
- More players are putting their automatic selection case forward for the 2020 EYC <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/compete/competitions/selection-policy-events/>
- Sports Aid, Backing the Best are still being confirmed. Ten TASS places have been awarded.
- 15 DISE places are being used with another 15 available for application now.
- Olympic qualification selections have been made for the singles events.
- Great work continuing with Wales and discussions with the rest of GB to maximise the development opportunities of our players.

## Challenges/Issues

The issues continue:

- Domestic competition standards and depth
- Preparing players for professional game
- Funding for individual players
- International competition; although more English players are competing internationally than in the recent past as noted by foreign coaches and event organisers

## National Council Meeting

### Department Update: Development and Volunteering

For Information

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Author: Greg Yarnell

#### Information/Activities - Last Period

- The second round of TT Kidz programmes have now started and some of the highlights are included below:
  - An additional 32 8-week programmes have run in February, taking the total number to 60 since its launch
  - An additional 330 young people have booked on for the February programmes, taking the total number of new participants to nearly 750
  - There are some great examples of retention following the 8 week programme, such as Ormesby TTC retaining over 50% of their participants, with 8 new girls joining their Hopes squad training.
  - Thousands of other young people have had the opportunity to try table tennis as a result of the engagement activity delivered by clubs in schools and the community
  - 30% of all participants have been female, against a membership of 10%
  - The feedback from the participants attending the 8 week programmes has been outstanding with an Net Promoter Score of 60, which is nearly in the World Class category
  - There have been a new wave of young coaches, volunteers and activators engaged and trained as part of the programme
  - We have given TT Kidz participants other opportunities to engage in the sport, which includes 10 that will be mascots and ball boys and girls at the Mark Bates Ltd National Championships
- TT Kidz in schools is being showcased at the Youth Sport Trust Conference at the end of February, we also have 18 schools currently that have purchased TT Kidz kit and are piloting the programme in their schools.
- The female ambassador and female coach scholarship programmes continue to progress well, where we are continuing to highlight the impactful and inspirational work being carried out by our female volunteers up and down the country.  
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/national-news/spotlight-1-on-chrissy-sykes-11-female-bursary-applicant/>  
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/female-ambassador-journeys-juliet-bertie/>
- Work to engage more female players continues with Bath League in particular running a very successful programme <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/bath-league-blazes-a-trail-for-women-and-girls/>
- The South East Conference went ahead with great success and feedback, despite their being lower numbers than we would like, unfortunately the London conference had to be cancelled due to low numbers.
- We have launched our brand new programme for 2020, Back to TT, this programme can be delivered by clubs or leagues and is all about attracting old players back to the sport. There is promotional materials and a guidance document around how to deliver available to all clubs and leagues when they sign up.  
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/back-to-table-tennis-programme-launched/>
- Our recent bid to host the International Referees Conference was successful and this event will come to Birmingham in November 2020. This will enable vital development for our current International Referees but also provide the opportunity for some of our Referees with ambitions to become International Referees to learn and network with the worlds best. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/top-referees-conference-to-be-held-in-birmingham/>
- We received confirmation this month that the Jack Petchey Foundation will continue to fund the table tennis programme in London and Essex for a phenomenal 10<sup>th</sup> year. Over the past 10 years they have contributed over £1.5million to the development of table tennis in schools and youth clubs.



- We have made an internal appointment to recruit Colette Gooding as our Programmes Lead, which will lead on our participation programmes and predominantly TT Kidz
- We have 8 successfully shortlisted individuals for the Pride of Table Tennis awards this year, with the two categories of Volunteer of the Year and Young Volunteer of the Year. These awards are being presented at the Mark Bates Ltd National Championships at the end of February, where all finalists received an all-expenses paid weekend trip to the Championships. Next year the Pride of Table Tennis awards will move back to the full number of awards, alongside the National Club, League and Volunteer Conference in June 2021.

#### **Information/Activities – Current/Future**

- There is still one regional conference upcoming for this season <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/clubs/clubs-guidance/club-and-volunteer-conference-booking-process-and-timeline/> :
  - Saturday June 6: East – location TBC, but likely in Newmarket
- The Be TT programme will launch at the end of March this year with focus remaining on female participation, U11 participation through TT Kidz and member experience. This will be open to applications for funding and staff support from all Premier Clubs, leagues and counties.
- Clubs or leagues keen to deliver TT Kidz in phase 3 will be open for applications from the end of March for 8-week programmes to start from October.

#### **Challenges/Issues**

- Whilst there has been an excellent start to the delivery of the TT Kidz programme and we are giving the opportunity for thousands more young people to get a great first experience in the game, we need to continue to support clubs to retain these participants after their 8 week programmes.
- Attendance at regional conferences this year remains reasonably low, with 17 at the Midlands conference, just over 20 in the North East, 12 in South East and only 3 in London. The feedback on the conferences is always exceptional and we need to develop understanding to encourage a broader attendance at these events, as they are promoted far and wide and through a variety of communication channels.

#### **Notes:**

## National Council Meeting

### Department Update: Mass Market

For Information

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Author: Keely Armitt

#### Information/Activities - Last Period

- We are working with 6 partners nationally to pilot a new Ping Pong Parlour Activator Workforce which will see a team of up to 10 p/t (10 hours per week) Activators operating in Parlours across England for a 6-month period from April. They will be employed by a local partner, but funded by us.
- Development of the Business Membership is going well with the systems being put in place internally to administer this. The Loop at Work product will evolve to include one years free TTE Business Membership, which in turn will give businesses and their employees access to The Hub. Through the Hub, we will have the opportunity to engage directly with participants in the workplaces and when the new Individual Membership Categories are ready, target them directly.
- The Milton Keynes European City of Sport status has opened up some opportunities for us to work more locally and we have been able to engage some local businesses and community groups with our products and programmes to grow provision in MK.
- We have supported the restructuring of the Marketing Department and are currently advertising for a Content Executive who will lead on developing the right type of engaging content for our more 'recreational' participants.
- So far this year (April 19 – Feb '20) we have created 140 new Ping in the Community projects and 44 new Loop at Work Businesses. We have also opened 20 new Ping Pong Parlours and believe that 2.3million people have taken part in one of our projects.

#### Information/Activities – Current/Future

- The Mass Market team will be supporting the Fan Zone at the National Championships on the weekend of 28<sup>th</sup> Feb – 1<sup>st</sup> March, giving people the opportunity to be active as well as spectate.

#### Challenges/Issues

- We have struggled to create any new Ping Pong Parlours during this period. This is not unusual for this time of year as many shopping units are still occupied after the busy Christmas retail period and we would expect some new opportunities to start arising for us again over the next couple of months.
- Many of our partners still view Ping! as a seasonal project, which they maximise in the summer months through activity at their outdoor tables. Some partners struggle with capacity to deliver anything table tennis related through the winter months. As we move towards the spring and have a new funding round open, we expect things to pick up again and to engage a number of new partners to deliver the project.
- The work on reviewing membership categories and the new website are both important development areas for enabling us to be able to create a closer, more meaningful and potentially more financially sustainable relationship with the 2million+ people that take part in one of our Mass Market programmes each year. The delays (mainly through a lack of internal capacity) and the budget limitations are a challenge.
- We are turning our attention to the next Sport England submission, trying to anticipate the opportunities and risks for us. It is a period of uncertainty for everyone and this must be managed. The next few months will be busy as we work through everything, whilst ensuring the day job continues and we remain on target for delivery.

## National Council Meeting

### Department Update: Competitions and Events

For Information

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Author: Neil Rogers

#### Information/Activities - Last Period

- The main focus of the few weeks since the last report has been the forthcoming [Senior National Championships 2020](#)
  - The [Qualification event](#) successfully took place early-January, with an increase in men's and women's entry from the inaugural event last year – and a very positive knock-on for [Championships entries](#), which is at capacity for all events except WD
  - We have agreed to use the ITTFs 'OVR' event management system, which will also support live court-side score-boards for 2 show courts, results and fixtures displays within the venue, push all relevant info and reports to our website, and provide 'live draw' functionality. This is expected to be a step-change in terms of presentation and spectator provision for the Championships
- Pre-event preparations are ongoing for the forthcoming busiest period of the season (March-June) which includes: VBL weekend 2, JBL weekend 2, Grand Prix 3, Cadet National Cup, U12 National Cup, Cadet & Junior Nationals, Inter-regional Finals, Grand Prix 4, U10-13 National Championships, Junior National Cup & Grand Prix 5

#### Information/Activities – Current/Future

- Active discussions are ongoing with potential venue partners in respect of hosting the ETTU men's European Championships 2020-2021 Stage 1A/ Group 2/ Round 1 versus ESP on Tuesday 13 October 2020. Site-visits are taking place in March, and a host will be agreed by April - allowing 6 months lead-time
- Alongside a number of ongoing process refinements agreed by Board, the BL Committee are building towards a re-write and rationalisation of the league entry process, and a significant tidy-up of the regulations (to address issues, discrepancies, contradictions, omissions etc)
- The [Rankings consultation](#) has launched, together with detailed supporting guidance documentation. The rankings working group will submit an initial proposal to Board in June for agreement
- The [British League Strategy consultation](#) has launched, together with supporting guidance documentation. The strategy working group will submit a draft Strategy to Board in June for agreement
- An event mapping exercise has begun to help inform the Competitions Review, for which a process outline will be submitted to Board in June

#### Challenges/Issues

- Linda Savage, Competitions & Events Administrator, will leave TTE at the end of February for an exciting opportunity in India working for the IPL (Indian Premier League) cricket

- The Sport:80 online tournament entry/ validation/ payment module was due to launch 01 July, and remains outstanding due to prioritisation on the development and delivery by Sport:80 of membership/ CRM, and transition of the ranking system. This has ongoing staffing implications including bulk manual entry processing, bulk manual payments, and bulk manual licensing checks

Additionally, the introduction of Tournament Management software can only be further considered once the Sport:80 online entry module is established, tested and launched

The timing/ comms for implementation of the online module will require careful consideration. A mapping exercise has taken place to clearly identify the process and implications, and the required decisions/ stakeholders

- A strategy for Event Volunteers still remains on hold pending feedback on potential overlap with the MAG Volunteering project

**Notes:**

## National Council Meeting

### Department Update: Marcomms

**For Information**

**Date: 14<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

**Author: Rebecca Hughes**

### Information/Activities

December – February

- Membership: Lead the membership review to ensure that we are effectively engaging, attracting and retaining members, including creating an outline proposal for Board based on insight from the Big TT Convo and other membership surveys and insight.
- Website:
  - Create and send out a tender document around redeveloping the Table Tennis England website.
  - Review tenders and submit costings to finance.
- TT Kidz:
  - Support TT Kidz with national marketing to drive sales for courses
  - Assist in launch of TT Kidz for schools
  - Create the weekly comms for TT Kidz participants
  - Attend TT Kidz sessions to create marketing materials
- Commercial: create sponsorship deck for National Championships sponsorship opportunities
- Finalise England kit and approve for mass production
- Performance: ensure we are meeting all obligations of the Aspiration Fund, including activation, promotion and reporting to UK Sport.
- Performance: begin production of a 4-episode podcast #TowardsTokyo2020 focusing on key areas:
  - Mental Health
  - Training and competing on the world tour- the lifestyle of an elite table tennis player
  - Living abroad
  - Pressure- how do you deal with it
- Performance: provide coverage of international competitions to promote and raise awareness of our England squads, including: Olympic Qualifier, German Open & Spanish Open, Top 16, Czech Junior Open, Portugal Senior Open, Hungarian Open, Swedish Youth Open
- Events: support events department in competition programme, incl. producing printed programmes and providing coverage for British League (WBL, VBL, JBL), Jack Petchey and promotion of Grand Prix.
- Nationals Qualification tournament: provide successful coverage of the national qualifying tournament that drives online engagement
- Senior Nationals:
  - Promotion of new partnership with Mark Bates
  - Promotion of tickets
  - Create floor plan and order new branding
  - Creation of Nationals programme
- Broadcast: liaise with 1080media and BBC around coverage for the National Championships
- Broadcast: announce launch of GB Sport & continue talks with ITTF/ETTU around securing coverage – new online streaming platform for Olympic & Paralympic sports

- Rankings: British League and Rankings consultations – creation of online survey, supporting document and promotion
- Support Be TT work, including:
  - Year three launch
  - Back to TT launch
  - Promotion of female coaching bursaries
- Continue to offer marcomms support to departments for products including: TT Leagues, clubs affiliation, club conferences, membership renewals and coaching courses.
- Comms: ongoing coverage of table tennis news and creation of weekly newsletter, bi-monthly club newsletter and quarterly schools' newsletter.

### **Challenges/Issues**

- Website: of the five companies who had expressed an interest in tendering, only two submitted a response. The others, which include two who we currently work with, felt the project was too large for them. As a result we have not met our procurement policy of having a minimum of three quotes. We have therefore had to send the tender out to further companies, delaying the process.

### **A Strictly Summary – Will Bayley**

#### **Website:**

##### Web pages:

- There was an increase in visits to the 'table tennis for people with disabilities page' when Strictly was on / around the announcement – mostly organic (i.e. from Google) showing that we perform well for this search term
- There was also an increase to the Strictly landing page, which signposted people onto playing opportunities
- The table finder saw spikes around the live shows and announcement as well
- Website visits peaked this month – the highest when compared to the previous 13 months
- Clubs did not engage with the disability/inclusivity content

#### **Social media:**

Posts on Will Bayley performed very well on Twitter during this period, and were often among the top performing posts for this time. There was no noticeable change on any other social media site.

#### **Google Trends:**

The below graph is from Google Trends, which shows the level of interest around Will Bayley over recent months. It shows that there was a high interest in him at the time of the show, but that this has diminished to almost zero once the show ended.