

Department Update: CEO

For Information

Date: 14th December 2019

Author: Sara Sutcliffe

Introduction

1. This report covers the last three months of activity. Please accept my apologies as I am in China with the Sandra attending a meeting with the ITTF.
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.
3. I would like to thank National Council for its ideas and input into the centenary celebrations. The Board approved the creation of the Centenary Working Group at its meeting in September. That Group will now consider the options and recommend a plan for Board approval. National Council will be kept informed of how we will celebrate this wonderful milestone in 2021/22.

Executive Report

4. In the last three months we have undertaken the process of recruiting two new directors and are delighted to welcome Steve Kemish and Priya Samuel to the Board, <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/two-new-directors-join-the-board/>. They will attend their first Board meeting on 9 and 10 January 2020. Dinner on the 9th will also be attended by Estyn Williams (Chairman of National Council) and Neil Hurford (Chairman of MAG) as relationships across these bodies are strengthened.
5. The professional staff continue to be very busy expanding our various programmes that assist clubs and leagues in growing the sport and providing ways in which to engage participants. We are particularly proud of the launch of TT Kidz in the last few months and have offered all participants a free membership for a year which will allow us to engage them on their journey beyond the TT Kidz introductory programme. It has also been positive to strike a financial deal with Table Tennis Australia who will also deliver TT Kidz (under a different brand). Likewise, the mass participation programmes continue to go from strength to strength with Sport England particularly interested in the social, welfare and community impact.
6. I had a very interesting visit to Downview and High Down prisons with coaches from Brighton Table Tennis Club to see and take part in the weekly coaching sessions they are running in those prisons. It helped inform a pilot project which we are undertaking with Sport England's support in a handful of other prisons around the country

7. Simon Mills' report highlights several recent solid international performances notably Charlotte Bardsley's first ITTF title and the men's team performance at the Team World Cup including beating a full-strength Japanese team. The Olympic Qualification Tournament takes place in January in Portugal.
8. The Midlands Conference in Birmingham in October and the North East Conference in Durham in November, where attendance was lower than hoped given the work that went into organising these events and the positive feedback that we receive from those that do attend. National Councillors are strongly encouraged to attend conferences when they are local to them as it is an important opportunity to interact with members and volunteers.
9. The executive team attended the mid-year review with Sport England as well as a session about the future Sport England strategy. Whilst we aren't expecting any significant deviation from the current strategy it is important to remember that the Sport England remit continues to grow bigger and their approach is to remain organisationally neutral – therefore NGBs are in competitive marketplace to achieve funding.
10. We have also attended three UK Sport workshops about the funding process for the Paris 2024 cycle which we are leading on behalf of British Table Tennis. We had a productive two day meeting with the other home country associations in October.
11. I hope that you have a productive National Council meeting and I look forward to reading the outputs from the two workshop session in particular.

Sara Sutcliffe

National Council Meeting

Department Update: Operations & Governance

For Information

Date: 14th December 2019

Author: Joanna Keay-Blyth

Information/Activities - Last Period

Sport England

During the last period we attended an NGB Membership meeting, to discuss Membership options with other NGBs including best practise in preparation for our Membership Review later in the year.

We also attended the Mid- Year review which was positive on the period to date results and also attended their Strategy consultation for their next funding cycle.

Sport England have invested in a pilot system to log and monitor safeguarding issues, 9 NGBs have been involved in the development and pilot of the system including ourselves and this system went live on the 10th October.

TT Membership – the main focus has been to ensure all renewals are completed, tidy up the data, preparation for the annual returns and ensuring the ranking configuration is accurate.

TT Leagues - continues to develop with the latest release version 1.5 being released on the 25th November 2019. Follow this link for the latest updates
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/tt-leagues-new-update/>

Recruitment for 2 new directors took place with some excellent candidates applying for the role and that would add value to the current Board.

Information/Activities – Current/Future

TT Memberships - We have renewed 23,700 since renewals opened in July and a record number have renewed online and over a third have set up auto renewals.

TT Leagues - now has 140 Leagues encompassing more than 22,000 players and includes the biggest six leagues in the country – Central London, Bristol, Southend, Leicester, Sheffield and Liverpool.

Since the last meeting we have had a Board Meeting and Governance and Risk Meeting. The board minutes can be found ; <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Board-report-September-2019.pdf>

Challenges/Issues

1. Data cleansing from the previous system to ensure it is a true reflection of clubs and leagues

2. Significant work on annual returns and electoral register in allocation of members and clubs to the correct leagues
3. Ranking issues – teething issues being ironed out but have caused significant workload to the customer service and ranking team

Actions from National Council Meeting 14th September 2019

Action Number	Assigned	Action Description	Outcome
1	Jo Keay-Blyth	U3A contact details to be distributed	Susie Hughes distributed this information in June 2019 and contacted tonyshapps@gmail.com
2	Jo Keay-Blyth	Consider weekend support from the membership team for leagues to call/have tickets answered	This will be considered in the new enrolment period of 2020/21
3	Tony Catt	Establish any connect between table tennis England and Military Table Tennis	This has not been able to be progressed as no contact details have been found.
4	All	Provide feedback on paper 19.8.3 via email to Ann Nixon	Complete
5	Greg Yarnall	Add update regarding Schools	Complete

In Memoriam

Geoff Rushton – National Councillor

Derrick Marples, Lancashire – England Coach and Vice President

National Council Meeting

Department Update: Talent and Performance

For Information

Date: 14th December 2019

Author: Simon Mills

Information/Activities - Last Period

- World Team Cup: Men reached last quarter final with two significant wins against Japan (WR#2) and Austria (WR#9), losing to Chinese Taipei,
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/brilliant-england-blow-away-hosts-japan/>
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/england-see-off-austria-to-top-group/>
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/england-run-ended-by-chinese-taipei/>
- Gavin Evans is seconded to lead the men's team in the journey to Olympic Qualification
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/gavin-evans-england-and-gb-role-is-an-honour/>
- Charlotte Bardsley won the Slovakia Junior Open and there were two team medals for teams with England players in them <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/two-team-bronzes-for-england-in-slovakia/> And
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/bardsley-is-slovakian-open-champion/>
- A host of medals from Portugal Junior Open
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/england-trio-on-the-podium-in-portugal/>
- England win the Home Nations Championships in Douglas, Isle of Man
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/england-earn-medal-haul-at-home-internationals/>
- Tom Jarvis reached the QF in both ITTF events in Belarus and Poland, with significant wins against top 100 players <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/jarvis-notches-two-big-victories-in-belarus/>
- Both Table Tennis England Senior Teams qualified for the World Team Championships in Busan, Korea. Selections will be made in December.
- Paul Drinkhall has been supporting the TT Kidz Programme;
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/drinkhall-joins-the-cool-kidz/>
- Hopes and Aspire Squads have been selected with nearly 50 players included
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/england-hopes-aspire-squads-named/>
- England Junior Squad has been selected with eight players accepting their place
- The DISE Programme has had its first camp with ten players accepting their place.

Information/Activities – Current/Future

- Funding application being made for the 21-25 UKS funding cycle
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/home-nations-get-together/>
- European Team Championships qualification is now known
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/european-championships-stage-1-draw-revealed/>
- Liam, Paul and Sam will continue to tell their stories in promotion of the community connections as part of the aspiration funding requirement.
- 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 and TASS places are being confirmed now.
- Next years squad policies will be out in February 2020
- Olympic policies have been announced

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/compete/competitions/selection-policy-events/>

Continuing to develop GB pathway and alignment with the other HN

Challenges/Issues

The issues from September continue as they are not quick fixes

- 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: 14th December 2019

Author: Greg Yarnall

Information/Activities - Last Period

- The first TT Kidz 8 week programmes have now taken place and some of the highlights are included below:
 - There have been 28 clubs deliver TT Kidz programmes in the first year
 - Nearly 400 young people have joined these programmes
 - 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 are female, against a membership of 10%
 - There have been a new wave of young coaches, volunteers and activators engaged and trained as part of the programme.
 - Some clubs had as high numbers as 26 and 27 new people into the sport
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/tt-kidz-sign-up-for-phase-two-delivery/> <https://www.ttkidz.co.uk/>
- Following the announcement of the partnership with Premier Education, it has so far seen 228 new table tennis sessions being delivered in schools
- The Officiating campaign has had great success to date with over 45 new umpires starting their umpiring journey and 41 umpires now on the #BEPARTOFIT journey towards Birmingham Commonwealth Games.
- The female ambassador and female coach scholarship programmes continue to flourish, with mentoring and support programmes now in place with mentors including Natalie Green, Sally Shutt and Andrea Holt.
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/female-action-plan-meeting-with-success/>
- The Midlands Conference went ahead with great success and great feedback.
<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/smashed-the-midlands-next-is-durham/>
- It is with great honour that we hosted the ETTU coaches conference with around 60 coaches present from Europe and our own country. It is the first ETTU conference in recent years that has given its host nation coaches the opportunity to attend alongside European coaches. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/european-coaching-conference-a-big-success/>
- The Young Ambassador scheme has now started for this year with 12 new Young people from 10 new clubs involved to date, making a total of 28 young people currently involved

Information/Activities – Current/Future

- The upcoming dates for regional club, league and coaching conferences have been announced and included below <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/clubs/clubs-guidance/club-and-volunteer-conference-booking-process-and-timeline/> :
 - Sunday November 24: Durham County Cricket Ground (North East)
 - Sunday January 19: South East
 - Sunday February 16: London
 - Saturday June 6: East

- TT Kidz phase 2 for clubs will commence from February 2020, with clubs signing up over the coming weeks.
- Back to Table Tennis programme (to attract people that used to play back to the sport) now in place and will be available to clubs and leagues over the coming months. This adds to the suite of programmes available to clubs and leagues to utilise as part of the Be TT programme, which already includes Bat and Chat (50+ programme), Young Ambassadors & TT Kidz
- We have put in a bid to host the International Referees Conference to the ITTF in 2020 and we will find out if we will host this event in December 2019.
- TT Kidz schools – see separate paper

Challenges/Issues

- Whilst there has been an excellent start to the delivery of the TT Kidz programme, we need to continue to work hard to educate clubs and coaches about the delivery of our game. It is vital that clubs and coaches adapt to the changing need of participants and the comprehensive research in place to focus on creating fun and vibrant sessions and do this alongside developing our talented players
- Attendance at regional conferences this year remains reasonably low, with 17 at the Midlands conference and 19 booked on the North East conference. The feedback on the conferences is always exceptional and we need to develop understanding to encourage a broader attendance at these events.

Schools Update

Current activity

- Merger with English Schools Table Tennis Association in 2017 and as a result there is a Schools Committee now in place
- Table Tennis England now run the full school's competition programme engaging over 10,000 students
- Schools packages – we have a range of schools packages available to schools, which are being extended in the coming months <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/clubs/schools/our-schools-offer/>
- We are in the 9 year of the Jack Petchey programme in London and Essex, which we receive funding to deliver from the Jack Petchey Foundation <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/clubs/jack-petchey-scheme/><https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/clubs/schools/courses-for-schools/>
- We deliver a range of courses in schools from a Teachers award to Youth Leadership

TT Kidz

- TT Kidz for schools has been being planned for the last few months following the launch of TT Kidz in March 2018
- We have 30-40 schools that will be involved in a pilot phase commencing from January 2020, schools will purchase a TT Kidz kit bag and receive all of the resources available to TT Kidz clubs and some basic online training to deliver a TT Kidz session
- The following roll out and promotion to engage more schools in delivery of table tennis and TT Kidz will commence from March 2020

Premier Education partnership

- We announced our partnership with *Premier Education* as an official school's delivery partner back in September 2019. To date there have been over 250 new participants

engaged in breakfast and after school clubs and over 60 Premier Education coaches trained up to deliver in schools across the country. We expect this number to rise to over 150 by the end of the academic year

* Premier Education are a primary school educational delivery agency who have coaches delivering sport in over 2500 schools across the country.

National Council Meeting

Department Update: Mass Market

For Information

Date: 14th December 2019

Author: Keely Armitt (Head of Mass Market)

Information/Activities - Last Period

- A successful mid-year review meeting with Sport England took place in early November and we were able to report that 1.78 million people have participated in Mass Market programmes since April 2019. Sport England acknowledged that much of the work we are doing with a 'mass market' is new and different and therefore traditional methods of gathering longitudinal insight are not appropriate. They have agreed to work with us to try to support this and have requested we gather individual stories to demonstrate the impact we are having on behavioural change (inactive to active) and the wider government outcomes of individual development, mental and physical wellbeing and social and community development.
- So far this year (April 19 – Nov '19) we have created 108 new Ping in the Community projects and 36 new Loop at Work Businesses. We have also opened 20 new Ping Pong Parlours with 9 regular sessions now happening in this setting, and have placed 30 new tables in other public spaces. Since the last report, partnerships have been created with two new Local Authorities/Active Partnerships (Stratford-upon-Avon and Northamptonshire Sport)
- The 'Power of Ping' campaign which celebrated 10 years of the project through 10 inspiring and heart-warming films delivered through social media, was hugely successful with lots of engagement and a massive spike in sales of our Ping in the Community package during its running.

Information/Activities – Current/Future

- The Hub, an online 'home' for workplace ping pong which allows businesses with table tennis tables to organise internal competition, run a rankings table, and gives access to beginner style coaching videos had a soft launch last week. The initially marketing was aimed at our existing Loop at Work customers, who have purchased tables in the last 6 months and we have already received a small take up of the free trial. The marketing campaign will extend to the other 450+ Loop at Work businesses over the coming weeks.
- We have recently released a couple of films on the Table Tennis England website about the Oxford All-comers Summer League and the Liverpool Ping Pong Parlour, which give wonderful examples of how the work we are doing with local partners, clubs and leagues with a wider market is having a positive impact on the more traditional table tennis offering - <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/opening-a-pathway-from-ping-to-league-play/>
- Members of the Mass Market Department have been supporting the Club Conference Programme, delivering a workshop to delegates on how they can support and benefit from the work we do with a mass market.

Useful links (to videos and articles)

View the published #PowerOfPing films here <https://www.pingengland.co.uk/#news>

View information on The Hub here – **PLEASE NOTE THIS IS NOT A PUBLICALLY AVAILABLE WEBPAGE AND THEREFORE THE ADDRESS SHOULD NOT BE SHARED -**
<https://pingpongclub.co.uk/>

Challenges/Issues

Our biggest challenge is customer engagement because we are one-step removed from the vast majority of our project delivery. This is necessary to enable scale. We are working with Becci Hughes (Customer Engagement Manager) to pilot some ideas in Parlours and will be working closely with her and the marcomms team on the development the new TTE website, ensuring this can speak to the whole table tennis market.

We continue to have a challenging relationship with Sportlabs on The Hub platform.

National Council Meeting

Department Update: Competitions & Events

For Information

Date: 14th December 2019

Author: Neil Rogers, Head of Competition & Events

Information/Activities - Last Period

- The '19/20 season is now well underway, with the following events having taken place:
 - [Grands Prix 1 and 2](#)
 - Rounds 1 and 2 of SBL Premier
 - Weekend #1 of SBL (all other divisions)
 - Weekend #1 of JBL, WBL and VBL
- A 6-month review of the '19/20 departmental workplan has taken place, with key objectives and timelines updated for Q3 and Q4
- New internal meetings have been established to regularly monitor and consider i) event operational/ logistic outputs and priorities (venues, accommodation, equipment, staff and volunteer appointments etc), and ii) competition structure and format (within context of current overall programme; player eligibility, event and match formats, invitations, prospectuses etc)
- An amendment to the Inter-Regional Championships qualification has been established to provide greater flexibility to the regional qualification process; the prescribed and dedicated regional qualifying event will now become general qualification/ selection from a regional event on specified date (eg. that could be a dedicated qualifier, or a regional championship, or a.n.other approach at the discretion of the region)
- Linda Savage is a new starter as Competitions & Events Administrator
- A discrete project has been initiated with a consultant to consider options relating to flooring storage and flooring services, in order to identify potential long-term cost-saving opportunities
- The working group of the Ranking Policy Group continues to make positive progress. The project objectives/ principles/ outline options/ strategic considerations/ practical considerations and timeframe have now been endorsed by Board, and MAG also appraised of the approach. The consultation itself will be two-fold, running between January-March 2020: via i) feedback reports invited from defined representative groups (presentations to be made to MAG on 11 Jan, and National Council on 14 March); and ii) open responses from individual stakeholders. The consultation will also be physically promoted at key events Jan-March
- Positive progress is also being made in 5 key strands relating to British League; firstly, the [league platform](#) is live, and fixtures and results can be easily seen by teams and players. This is not yet the finished article - but we are past the initial teething issues – and following feedback from stakeholders in the past few months, we will continue to refine the interface for teams, users and visitors to ensure this is fit for purpose moving forward.

Secondly, we have appointed a new Press Officer for SBL Premier, and agreed with the TTE MarComms department a defined schedule for SBL, WBL, VBL and JBL – this means we now have

clarity and confidence on what publicity and promotion will be produced for each section, and when.

Thirdly, the Committee have started to revisit a number of background processes to ensure that we have efficiency and consistency in future seasons; an [administrative calendar](#) has been produced to ensure that essential functions are planned and delivered ahead of the curve, and that contact with teams – entry forms, validation, deadlines, invoicing etc – will have a consistent format and approach moving forward.

Fourthly, an internal exercise to identify inconsistencies, errors and proposed amendments to the governance structure and event regulations has begun, and will report to Board.

Lastly (for now!), the Committee, in conjunction with TTE Board, is starting to look at a longer-term strategy for British League, in order to help define ‘why we do what we do’, and enable us to be more dynamic and responsive moving forward. We will be consulting on this in the new year, following the same broad approach as the Rankings consultation above (National Council will receive a presentation in March, and will be invited to respond). I am confident this will give BL a robust framework and clear objectives from which future decisions around critical competition issues such as structure and format can be made.

Information/Activities – Current/Future

- We have received the draws for ETTU men’s European Championships 2020-2021 Stage 1A/ Group 2/ Round 1, which will be held at Home v ESP on Tuesday 13 October 2020. A further Home fixture v SLO will take place in Spring 2021 (date TBC). A venue will shortly be sought for the October match
- Key planning and preparation for the [Senior National Championships 2020](#) has begun
- Budgeting for 20/21 has started across all core events, and for volunteer-led competitions (NCL/ NJL, ELCC, County Championships, British League etc)

Challenges/Issues

- A number of workforce challenges have arisen within British League, and we have multiple vacancies. The additional support requirements consequently falling to the Competitions staff team for events that have historically been volunteer-delivered is unsustainable alongside the existing competition programme. The business-risk of current reliance on a small number of key volunteers in critical roles is being considered
- The ongoing delay of the Sport:80 online tournament entry/ validation/ payment module continues to have significant staffing implications including bulk manual entry processing, bulk manual payments, bulk manual licensing checks, and inability to introduce a tournament management platform, until such time as it is tested and launched

National Council Meeting

Department Update: Marketing & Communications

For Information

Date: 14th December 2019

Author: Rebecca Hughes

Objectives for period:

- Membership: Begin and lead the membership review to ensure that we are effectively engaging, attracting and retaining members
- Mass: Soft launch new workplace product, The Ping Pong Hub, to help drive participation in workplaces and engagement with Table Tennis England
- Comms: Begin a communications review to understand how members are currently engaging and how we can improve this engagement with them
- Comms: Begin website review to understand the current effectiveness of the website ahead of creating a website redevelopment brief
- TT Kidz:
 - Support TT Kidz with national marketing to drive sales for courses
 - Promote membership offer to participants
 - Support phase 2 development of TT Kidz – attracting more clubs and schools
 - Create the weekly comms for TT Kidz participants
 - Attend TT Kidz sessions to create marketing materials for phase two
- Performance: ensure we are meeting all obligations of the Aspiration Fund, including activation, promotion and reporting to UK Sport.
- Performance: provide coverage of international competitions to promote and raise awareness of our England squads, including: Team World Cup, Europeans, ITTF World Tours (Swedish and Austrian Open), Portugal Youth Open, Slovakia Youth Open, Hungary Youth Open
- Performance: Finalise new England kit designs and sign off on samples
- Implement Strictly Come Dancing marketing plan to ensure we capitalise on a rare media opportunity and inspire more people to play the sport
- Comms: supporting national campaigns including 25 years of the National Lottery and Parents in Sports Week.
- Volunteers: create a marketing plan to announce and drive nominations for the new format Pride of Table Tennis awards and promote the Young Ambassadors programme to attract more young people to volunteer in clubs.
- Media: begin a media review to ensure we have the correct contact for national media outlets and begin to engage them ahead of the Olympics in an attempt to drive more national media coverage of the sport.
- Support core department with promotion of Be TT, incl. new funding round, coaching bursaries, women and girls ambassador programme

- Merchandise: create a new marketing plan to promote the merchandise range and begin a merchandise review to understand the offer from other NGBs, with a view to develop our own.
- Events: launch promotion for Senior National Championships
- Events: support events department in competition programme, incl. producing printed programmes and providing coverage for Grand Prix & British League series.
- Events: recruitment of British League press officer
- Comms: ongoing coverage of table tennis news and creation of weekly newsletter, bi-monthly club newsletter and quarterly schools newsletter.
- Continue to offer marcomms support to departments for products including: TT Leagues, clubs affiliation, club conferences, membership renewals, coach courses and ETTU conference, Ping!

Progress / issues, roadblocks & challenges:

- Membership review – progress is being made. Smaller sub-working groups have been set up to report back to the main group on a proposal.
- The Hub – small launch, which revealed tech issues that the mass team are working on resolving
- Communication review – initial report is being completed this month.
- Website review – completed analysis of current website and are currently working with each department to create clearer customer journeys and content plans.
- TT Kidz – really successful number of sign ups for courses.
- Aspiration Fund: completed phase one report in October.
- Coverage of international events all completed. Very successful media coverage of Team World Cup through behind-the-back shots from Pitchford. On Friday it was featured on Sky Sports News throughout the day in the hourly sports summary bulletin. BBC posted on its website, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts on Friday – it was the ‘most viewed’ piece of content on the BBC website at one point, and far outperformed other social media posts. The post was so successful, that the BBC posted it again on Saturday. It was also featured on BBC Breakfast on Saturday as the final piece in the sports summary bulletins.
- England kit – samples received and further amendments requests.
- Strictly: We saw significant spikes to the website and places to play map during Strictly – particularly during the times it was televised.
- British League: difficulty in increasing the level of promotion for the Premier level due to lack of response from some teams.