

## NATIONAL COUNCIL – MINUTES 14<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2019

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## NATIONAL COUNCIL – MINUTES 14<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2019

Minutes of the National Council Meeting held at Table Tennis England, Bradwell Road, Loughton Lodge, Milton Keynes, MK8 9LA, on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at 11:00 am.

### ATTENDEES:

**CHAIR:** Estyn Williams (EW) (Warwickshire)

**NATIONAL COUNCILLORS:** David L Hockney (Avon), Alex Murdoch (Bedfordshire), Brian Freer (Cambridgeshire) Karen Tonge MBE (Cheshire), Alan E Ransome OBE (Cleveland), John Cowell (Derbyshire), Phil Ashleigh (Essex), Jim Bolton (Lancashire), Shirley Pickering (Leicestershire), Malcolm Allsop (Nottingham), Neil Hurford (Oxfordshire), James Kenny (South Yorkshire), James Skinner (Sussex ), Estyn J Williams (Warwickshire), Charles Noel Sewell (Wiltshire), Martin Clark (Worcestershire ), Richard B Hudson (Yorkshire),

**DEPUTY NATIONAL COUNCILLORS:** Brian Whitehead (Hertfordshire), Andrew Walker (Hampshire), Clive Hollingsbee (Kent)

**OTHER:** Caroline Williams (Voting Review Group)

**BOARD:** Anthony Catt, Tom Purcell

**STAFF:** Simon Mills, Joanna Keay-Blyth

### APOLOGIES:

**NATIONAL COUNCILLORS:** Sue Hayes (Buckinghamshire), Diana Jermyn (Cornwall), Andrew Millman (Devonshire), Reinhard Lindner (Dorset ), Allan Thompson (Durham), Leslie Smith (Gloucestershire), Harry Jutle (Herefordshire), David Edwards (Hertfordshire), Neil Le Milliere (Kent), George Tyler (Lincolnshire), Anthony Dias (Middlesex), Gareth Pearson (Northumberland), Clifford Bell (Staffordshire), Brian Davison (Suffolk), Margot Fraser (Surrey ),

**BOARD:** Sandra Deaton, Sara Sutcliffe, Susie Hughes, Mark Quartermaine, Doug Livingstone, Simon Griew, Dee Patterson, Charlie Childs

### STAFF:

**OTHERS:** Mrs Jill Parker (President), Mike Smith (BUCS), Jan Johns (VETTS),

## 1. INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR

1.1 Estyn Williams (EW) welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 11:00am. EW also thanked staff for the organisation of the meeting and for producing department update reports. EW said that he welcomed any feedback regarding the meeting/agenda/location etc and to send this via email to Joanna Keay-Blyth (JKB) with a copy to himself.

1.2 EW also announced the sad news that David Turner, Regional Chair (South) and National Councillor (Hampshire) had passed away whilst at Milton Keynes following the Regional Chairs meeting

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1.3 Alan Ransome (Cleveland) (AER) registered his business interest

### IN MEMORIAM

**National Council learnt with sadness of the passing of the following who had rendered long and distinguished service to the Sport:**

**David Turner** - Regional Chair (South) and National Councillor (Hampshire)

**Derrick Marple** – Lancashire – England Coach and Vice President

**Geoff Rushton** – National Councillor (Lancashire)

**The National Councillors and all those present stood and observed a minute's silence in their memory.**

## 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 The Chairman proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting and this was carried.

## 2.2 ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

2.3 AER referred to Action Point 1 that contact details of U3A are circulated. JKB to resend in actions. (Included in action appendix 1).

2.4 A Murdoch (AM) stated there was an action from the previous meeting relating to new umpires and why they had to pay for their own courses. (Included in action appendix 1).

2.5 J Skinner (JS) – stated the notes from working Group D on Centenary were not in the minutes, JS to send to JKB who will add to the minutes. (Included in action appendix 1).

2.6 If any National Councillor is a member of any other groups can they forward minutes to JKB to be included in future reports.

## 3 Reports from other bodies

3.1 **MAG** - EW congratulated Neil Hurford (NH) on his appointment as Chair of MAG

3.2 NW summarised MAG position

3.3 JS asked NH what MAGs immediate priorities were

3.3.1 NH Stated 1. Coaching 2. Volunteers 3. How does MAG engage with the members

3.3.2 JS was pleased that Volunteers was a priority

3.4 N Sewell (NS) – thanked NH for support

3.5 EW requested if there were any point to be raised with MAG to forward to JKB who will disseminate plus a copy to himself

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3.6 **Clubs** – National Councillors thanked Claire Brockwell for the paper

### **4 Voting and Company Membership Workshops**

4.1 EW introduced the discussion topic and stated that it was not an easy topic to discuss as there are many options, which Tom Purcell (TP) would brief NC on.

4.2 Caroline Williams (CW) summarised the current structure of the voting system

4.2.1 There are 3 types of Company Member – 1 Individual (Director), County Representative (NC), League Representative – all Company Members have to be appointed by completing the relevant forms.

4.2.2 There are 2 systems in use on for Director Elections (every 4 years) and one for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) once per year.

4.2.2.1 Director Elections – Number of votes depends of position Directors 1 vote, County 1 vote, Leagues will depend on how many teams they have so either 2, 4 or 6 votes

4.2.2.2 AGM – Depends on type of Company member – Directors 1 vote, Leagues 1 vote per player member, Counties 1 vote for every player member in every league within their county

4.2.3 Structure can only be changed at the AGM as it is in the Articles and needs 75% support to change

National Council broke into 4 working groups to discuss the points outlined in TP options paper. The notes taken by each of the sub groups are included in appendix 2.

#### **Summary Overview of Feedback from Workshops**

On return to the main meeting each sub group was invited to report back orally which they did as follows.

##### **Group A**

1. Feedback for the group stating that overall the group felt that they were keen to keep the decision making with NC as they were the most informed and could use the votes with the most knowledge because they receive the most information.

2. They were also against having just the one type of voting structure as it felt that the elections were localised and support generated locally.

##### **Group B**

1. Feedback was similar to Group A but they would like for each member to just 1 primary league rather than being double counted in numerous leagues.

2. They would also like the definition of Company Member to be reviewed.

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### Group C

1. They felt in relation to 2 systems then 1 was favourable but what that was, was not clear
2. Premier and affiliated clubs should be included
3. Only 1 primary league should be used not numerous
4. Didn't look at weighting for voting

### Group D

1. Felt the 2 systems should be kept separate
2. Felt that if it was one member one vote too many wouldn't vote
3. Remove double counting of members as part of 2 leagues and just 1 primary league
4. Happy with the current system for Director elections
5. Felt that clubs would include more duplications if they were part of a club or league and they would need to only choose one, whether that was the club or league to give their vote to,

### Additional Comments

K Tonge (KT) stated that big Clubs have members that don't play in Leagues only in Clubs and should have a vote

AER – felt there would need to be a new counting structure if Premier Clubs and Larger clubs were included

NH – felt Clubs should be more involved in the Governance and have a voice

The Chairman then invited members to take part in a series of indicative votes on the questions posed in TPs paper and the results were as follows:

Point No	Questions	Yes	No
1	Should the same voting procedures be used at the AGM and for Director voting? If yes answer question 2 and 4, if no answer question 3 and 4.	9	10
2	If you favour changing to one set of voting procedures which system do you prefer:		
a	using the Director elections voting system based on team numbers (simplified to 1, 2, 4 or 6 votes) for both elections and AGM	None	
b	using the AGM system based on player numbers for both elections and AGM	10	
c	using a system where all company members only have one vote unit for Director elections and at the AGM	None	
d	using a system where all player members have individual voting rights with one vote each (this will have cost and other implications due to the size of the electorate so may not be easy to implement immediately)	None	
3	If you do not favour changing to one set of voting procedures		

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a	are you happy with the current AGM voting procedures and if not how do you think it should be changed?	15	4
b	are you happy with the current Director voting procedures and if not how do you think it should be changed?	15	3
4	Should company membership include club representation?		
a	If yes consider what system should be used to decide on what votes should be given to the club	7	8
b	If yes consider whether this should be restricted to Premier Clubs,	6	
	or open to all clubs over a certain size	8	
	or open to all clubs.	None	

The meeting adjourned for lunch.

### Afternoon Session

#### 5 CHAIRMANS REPORT

No questions asked

#### 6 BOARD REPORT

No questions

#### 7 CEO REPORT

7.1 It was requested that when a member of the Board visited a County could the NC for that county and the local league be informed

#### 8 OPERATIONS REPORT

8.1 Link to the military was discussed and Table Tennis England are still pursuing other avenues on how we link closer

8.2 AER requested a summary of league information, JKB stated that the spreadsheet up until 2018/19 had been distributed and once Annual Returns had been finalised 2019/20 would be distributed ahead of the March meeting. (Included in action appendix 1).

8.3 AER – was concerned with the number of issues he'd received from members in relation to the ranking results.

8.4 JKB – stated there had been some issues in transferring to the new system in ensuring all processes were automated and it was as frustrating for her and the TTE team when they have entered over 11,000 results in November. TTE are working hard with Sport 80 to eliminate these issues.

#### 9 FINANCIAL REPORT

9.1 Martin Clarke (MC) stated his dissatisfaction with the content of the report and that the diagrams were very difficult to read and could it be in a written table format

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- 9.2 This was also supported by Alex Murdoch (AM), AER and Malcolm Alsopp (MA) who requested more information to be provided
- 9.3 JKB stated that this is what had been agreed by the Board to be supplied to National Council.
- 9.4 NH stated that he disagreed and that he found this very helpful and valued what he received
- 9.5 Jim Skinner (JS) – stated that NC had no rights and TTE did not have to release information to members

### 10 DEVELOPMENT & VOLUNTEERING REPORT

- 10.1 AER was concerned that Premier Education was a very southern organisation and what was being done for the Northern areas.
- 10.2 S Mills (SM) stated that they were currently looking at other partners to try and tackle this issue.

### 11 MARKETING AND COMMS

- 11.1 AER stated he would have liked to have seen more details on the positive impact of Will Bailey against the marketing strategy developed.
- 11.2 EW asked if NC had seen Sara Sutcliffe podcast which he felt was very positive and NC's should view. The podcast interviewers were very interested in Will and 'Strictly'. Link below.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/sara-sutcliffe-appears-on-national-podcast/>

### 12 WORKSHOP 2 – MISSION 2025 AND MEMBERSHIP STRATEGY

- 12.1 The chairman-explained that the Board had established a sub-committee to review the long term strategy Mission 2025. The Board had invited National Council's views and in particular its views on the following three issues concerning Membership Strategy.
- 12.1.1 How we can work with our leagues and clubs to increase their membership.
- 12.1.2 How we can aim to have a pathway to guide those who take part in mass participation projects towards joining local clubs, leagues or other suitable outlets.
- 12.3.1 How we can widen the organisations affiliated to us beyond the traditional leagues and clubs so that we can guide their members towards joining Table Tennis England.

The meeting broke into sub groups to discuss these and the notes taken in the sub groups are included as appendix 3. The chairman explained that these would be supplied to the sub-committee reviewing Mission 2025.

### 12 MARCH WORKSHOP OUTLINE

- 12.1 SM outlined the requirements for this workshop on 'How can we encourage children and young people to take up and progress in the sport?' The Chairman invited National Councillors to discuss these issues with their membership between now and March so that could come to the meeting fully briefed as to the views in their counties.

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12.1.1 How can we attract and retain more young people to table tennis?

12.1.2 Consideration could be given some or all of the following:

### **People**

How do we support and develop the right activators and coaches to attract these people?

What age should we focus on?

### **Places**

Where can we make this happen?

Clubs/Schools?

### **Participants**

How to make sure our sport is attractive to a young audience?

### **13 A.O.B.**

- 13.1 AER requested the next date after March so planning could take place. EW confirmed that he had requested the next 4 dates when the Company Chairman, CEO and venue were available and was waiting for confirmation following the Board meeting in January.
- 13.2 NH stated he would be happy with 4 dates in the new format as more productive
- 13.3 TC thanked on behalf of the board the positive impact from the work groups and the contribution
- 13.4 KT requested following the unfortunate incident with David Turner that a contact list for NC is collated and for other key meeting so that next of kin can be contacted.

The meeting concluded at 3.45pm.



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### Appendix 1 – Actions

This section includes actions discussed and agreed in the meeting.

Action Number	Assigned	Action Description
1	Jo Keay-Blyth	U3A contact details to be distributed - Tony Shapps - <a href="mailto:tonyshapps@gmail.com">tonyshapps@gmail.com</a>
2	G Yarnell	Why do new umpires have to pay for their own courses?
3	Jo Keay-Blyth	Working Group D on centenary to be added to minutes once received by J Skinner
4	Jo Keay-Blyth	Collate league data from annual returns
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
6	G Yarnell	Link to Military to be pursued further
7	Jo Keay-Blyth	Look at further summary on the impact of Will Bailey
8	Board	Decision on next meeting dates
9	Jo Keay-Blyth	Contact List for National Councillors to be collated including Next of Kin details

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### Appendix 2 – Voting Workshop Summary

#### Group C

1. Felt that the voting System for Director Elections and the AGM should be the same.
2. Votes per player member was the most democratic system, albeit concerns were raised about members who play in more than one League. We considered that the new League and Membership system could overcome this problem by members nominating their prime League and only using this in voting hence eliminating duplication.
3. Considered that one vote for company members was undemocratic as it does not reflect the size of Leagues and the player members vote should stand.
4. Did not conclude about how the votes were distributed to Club Representative Member.
5. Felt a Club Representative Member should be put in place. This could apply to both Premier Clubs and Designated Affiliated Clubs (DAC) and a determination on the size of these clubs membership should be discussed. Standard small clubs playing in Leagues would not come into this category.
6. Voting by Clubs should only apply to Player Members and not Associates. This would be an area of future discussion as if number 2 applied the vast majority of the clubs members play in Leagues. Consideration could be given to members who are not Player Members but have Licence to play in events as they have no vote at this time.

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### Appendix 3 – Membership Strategy Feedback from Workshops

#### GROUP A

- a. Development Officers to assist/encourage clubs – as per R.D.O. System.
- b. Professional advice & support from Governing Bodies with details of obtaining funding etc. Advice leaflets already exist.
- c. The principle here is that a Professional Development Officer from Table Tennis England would visit the club or League to make a presentation about the methods of assisting or encouraging Clubs to recruit more members through PING! or Ping Parlour, Schools, TTKidz or Bat & Chat to generate enthusiasm for the programme and then work with the volunteers to put together an implementation plan. This project worked very well in the RDO period.
- c. Premier Clubs to encourage links with Social Clubs.
- d. Bat & Chat and 50+ - where? How to find out?
- e. Create register of clubs catering for table tennis play – but not existing league play.
- f. Table Tennis England to publish a list of Clubs that have the capacity and capability to welcome new members introduced to the sport through PING! or Ping Parlours and then to concentrate their efforts to establish Ping Parlours within the vicinity of these Clubs.
- g. Revisiting Organisations in Good Standing and how we can interact with their members.
- h. Training members to help Clubs.

I To establish a training programme to educate and qualify volunteers as Local Development Officers

P.S. Do not be afraid to revisit what has been previously tried despite the fact that it did not work, or did not work as well as expected, because it may now prove to be successful.

#### GROUP B

##### **League/Clubs**

- Communication – Advertising Clubs, Venues, Activities e.g. Coaching Demonstrations;
- Volunteers (Primary Objective);
- Summer Competitions;
- Specialist Events e.g. Social, Ladies, Mums, 2 person Leagues, Junior/Cadet;
- Pathways from Club Initiatives to Leagues;
- Benchmarking Information;
- Promotion of local success;
- Greater Media coverage (none currently) – Press/Photo Officer's;
- Local Publicity – Inclusivity, all Sports;

##### **Other**

- Training Packs for Teachers, Movements similar to Dance;
- TTE Website Ideas Section;

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- Utilisation of other Venues for basic level – Work, Libraries, Banks, Scouts, Guides, Village Community Centre, Universities, Colleges;
- Promotional Information Pack with ability to be customised for local use;
- Involve other Sporting Club for Interest e.g. Football, Golf;
- How to stop players “being lost” on going to University;
- Target return of Players at Veteran Level

It was clear that local Resources were the biggest issue to progression of any of the above

### **GROUP C**

1. How we can work with our Leagues and Clubs?

- a. Website
- b. Social Media
- c. Word of Mouth – Knock on effect
- d. Using a Junior League to get them started
- e. Inter- league and inter club competitions
- f. Flexibility of leagues to allow players to start at different times
- g. Encourage 2 player leagues to allow juniors to finish early
- h. 3 player leagues but with fewer games
- i. TTE to improve coaching credentials and to encourage more grass roots players to taking coaching qualifications
- j. Review upskill coaches

2. How we can aim to have a pathway to guide those who take part in mass participation projects towards joining local clubs, leagues or other suitable outlets

- a. Over 50's clubs and that encourages those who are interested to join a team
- b. Schools league structure to be encouraged on a local education authority or ESTA.
- c. Community Table Tennis Clubs for beginners to start
- d. Ping
- e. Information in local leisure centres to inform people where they can go to play table tennis.
- f. Have coaches involved with Racketlong to encourage
- g. Link in University Fresher days to encourage Table Tennis at the beginning of their studies (BUCS)
- h. Encourage information into Community Organisations (Ethnic Minorities, Chinese, European) to give them information on where they can go to play Table Tennis

3. How we can widen the organisations affiliated to us beyond the traditional leagues and clubs so that we can guide their members towards joining Table Tennis England>

- a. Company membership, Ping in the workplace
- b. Ping Pong Parlours
- c. Companies to be encouraged to become Associate Members of TTE
- d. U3A Collaboration
- e. DCMS (get them involved)
- f. Racketlong (Squash, TT, Tennis, Badminton) get them involved

### **GROUP D**

1. **How can we work with our league and clubs to increase their membership?**

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- What is the progress in implementing the membership strategy? Has membership gone up or gone down? What segments have increased and which decreased? What is the evidence about which initiative have or have not worked? Sharing this information with leagues and clubs would be helpful.
  - Increasing league membership is not always the appropriate goal. Some players simply want to play socially and have no interest in playing in league competitions (as currently configured)
  - League competitions need to be made more attractive to social players who might be tempted to play competitive table tennis.
  - The traditional 3AS/10 sets format is often a barrier to players moving from social to competitive table tennis
  - Short format competitions 2AS/5 sets or 3AS/6 sets are more appropriate for bridging the gap between social and competitive play
  - What has been the impact of bring ESTTA inside TTE? Has this increased or decreased schools' participation in leagues/clubs?
- 2. How can we aim to have a pathway to guide those who take part in mass participation projects towards joining local clubs, leagues or other suitable outlets?**
- Much closer liaison between Mass Participation schemes (Ping! and Ping Pong Parlours) and local leagues, and particularly clubs.
  - Social players can be signposted to those club which welcome occasional social players
  - The Mass team should actively seek guidance from leagues and clubs on how to establish appropriate pathways
  - An essential part of the Mass Participation process should be to sell the benefits of Associate Membership so that social players are part of the TTE umbrella.
- 3. How can we widen the organisations affiliated to us beyond the traditional leagues and clubs so that we can guide their members towards joining Table Tennis England?**
- Draw up a list of other organisations that are formally/informally linked to TTE, e.g. Armed Forces, Transplant Games. Establish key contacts in each of these – using knowledge of TTE members where appropriate

Discuss with these organisations how to strengthen links and seek their feedback on other organisations that have a table tennis element that might become part of the TTE umbrella

### **Direct feedback from Northumberland**

We discussed the letter at our last committee meeting and came up with three ideas:

- To increase participation and membership leagues could introduce a Social League and a Business League under their current league structure. The Social League would just be for any social groups who want to play for fun and the Business league would be for local businesses to play against each other. The Social league and Business League could benefit from the league organisation in terms of game scheduling and results but would not automatically qualify for promotion or relegation to the main leagues. We saw this as a bit like professional football and semi-professional football and a sort of pyramid system. Teams could move into the competitive leagues if they felt they were ready to play at that level.

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- Consider whether we make a league in the winter league a junior league only to encourage young players to play against children of the same age and play this on a Friday which doesn't affect school. These would be the entrance from any TT Kidz initiatives. Consideration would have to be given to whether there was automatic promotion or whether when the children got to a standard they moved up into one of the higher league teams.
- What can we do to create more links locally with Badminton England on governance and organisation.

### **Direct Feedback from Cornwall**

1. One club found offering free Associate Membership to Table Tennis England helped secure club membership when the advantages and benefits were explained.
2. One club is trying to incorporate U3A players into the club so they have a venue with good facilities to use. This would save U3A members money and benefit the club and TTE with Associate Members.