

Chief Executive's Report

Introduction

This report covers the last three months of activity, since September 2020.

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. I will try not to repeat that detail and instead focus on the bigger picture and the stakeholder landscape.

As we draw to the end of the most extraordinary year, I wish all of you and your families a healthy, safe and enjoyable Christmas whatever the circumstances you are in. I am sure we all share in the same strong desire that 2021 will bring an end to this pandemic and that our lives can all start to resemble normality again.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Senior Leadership Team and all of the staff for their dedication, flexibility, adaptability, and general tenacity over this testing year. I am proud of each and every one of them.

I would also like to thank Sandra and the Board for the additional time they have given in the last few months to support the executive as we continue to manage the ever-changing situation.

Executive Report

The various departmental reports explain the impact of Covid 19 but as you will be aware all national competition has been cancelled so far this season, and whilst some leagues did manage to start some activity much of that has now ceased again. The office is shut again and will remain so for the foreseeable future.

Internationally some activity took place with the ITTF's World Cups and Tour Finals and then the first World Table Tennis event in Macau. These were invitation events which Liam Pitchford attended, basing himself (with Gavin Evans) in China for almost 6 weeks. However just this week it has been confirmed that the rescheduled 2020 World Championships have been cancelled. However, there is increased optimism that the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games will proceed in July 2021 although probably not quite in the same way as usual.

Zoom continues to be the way of life and I thank National Council again for adapting too. We do all look forward to being able to meet again in person when it is permissible.

We continue to update our Return to Play advice to clubs, leagues, coaches and members on a regular basis as Government advice changes and as we receive clarification from DCMS and Sport England. We are aware that venue accessibility is a primary concern and wherever possible we are helping clubs find alternative solutions – some of which has included using publicly available Ping tables and Ping Pong Parlours.



Departmental Reports

We have also been active partners of the Save Our Sport collation, lobbying for a Sports Recovery Fund and other sector support.

Sport England/UK Sport

We are ending the year on a high note with UK Sport confirming a £1.35m investment in British Table Tennis from its progression fund. This is marked change in strategy from UK Sport as the seven sports funded in this group are not expected or required to deliver significant international results in this cycle. It is about 'system build' and ensuring that the foundations of an elite performance programme are fully developed to bring the next generation through. It is focussed on a longer-term strategy of delivery in 8-12 years. The bid was led by Table Tennis England working closely with colleagues in the Home Nations and the investment will work in a similar model with UK Sport accepting that the reinvention of a British Table Tennis company would not be optimal or proportionate for this investment. Instead, the British grant will be managed via Table Tennis England and, in agreement with the Home Nations, a British Table Tennis Committee will be formed.

We will continue to discuss with UK Sport how the men's team in particular can be supported to Paris 2024. It is worth remembering that we also benefit from a £250,000 Sport England grant to support men's and women's preparation through to the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

I also congratulate our colleagues at British Para Table Tennis who received a significantly increased UK Sport award for the Paris cycle, bucking the trend which saw most sports receive a reduced award in the current financial climate.

All in all, British performance table tennis has never had such a level of public investment which is encouraging, and we must ensure it is focussed wisely to lay the foundations for the future as well as delivering results in the present.

Finally, as previously mentioned Sport England has already committed a 'rollover' award in that they have granted us the equivalent of our Year 4 award into an unprecedented Year 5. This provides a degree of comfort and certainty in otherwise uncertain times. The 2021/22 budgets are currently being drafted although we are taking a conservative view of membership numbers/revenue for the budgeting process.

ITTF/ETTU

The Chairman's report covers recent activity within ITTF and ETTU areas and this will be discussed in more detail at the meeting.

Commonwealth Games/Birmingham 2022

We have continued to liaise with the Birmingham 2022 Organising Committee on a number of aspects as they head into the last 18 months of preparation. There is a very transparent relationship between B2022, CGE and Sport England who together provide a regular NGB CEO update and we have individual sports contacts as well. In the coming months more information will come to us on technical matters, tickets, volunteer recruitment, official's recruitment, and legacy planning etc.

Departmental Reports

An unexpected change in the para classifications has seen us liaise with the ITTF, Commonwealth Games Federation, CTF and Birmingham 2022. As I write we understand that the ITTF is asking the CGF to reconsider the classification grouping.





Departmental Reports

Talent & Performance Team – Simon Mills

Information/Activities - Last Period

- Liam Pitchford competed in the ITTF restart series including the inaugural World Table Tennis event in Macau:

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/i-know-what-i-need-to-work-on-says-pitchford/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pitchford-takes-to-wtt-in-style-with-opening-victory/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pitchford-excited-by-new-wtt-era/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/not-good-enough-admits-honest-pitchford/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pitchfords-world-cup-ended-by-ovtcharov-in-thriller/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/pitchford-storms-into-world-cup-knockout-stage/>

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/im-in-great-shape-for-restart-says-pitchford/>

- Recruitment for a Women's Captain in partnership with University of Nottingham is underway:

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/vacancy-for-national-womens-coach/>

- Gavin Evans appointed to Men's Captain:

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/gavin-evans-to-lead-england-men-to-birmingham-2022/>

- Lockdown does not stop training programmes for England Squads:

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/england-pathway-training-moves-online-for-lockdown/>

- DiSE programme takes on another 13 players:

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/dise-combining-education-and-the-performance-pathway/>

- Team England appoint TT team leader for B2022

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/team-england-name-simon-as-table-tennis-team-leader/>

- Backing the best support announced (for financial year 2020-21).

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/young-athletes-get-backing-from-sportsaid/>



Departmental Reports

Information/Activities – Current/Future

- UK Sport funding application decision due 18/12. May be delayed due to CSR delays
- Commonwealth Games qualification route still being worked on, Para classes are also still being discussed with the ITTF and CGE.
- Assessment days being held for Hopes and Aspire Squads 12-13 December 2020
- England Junior Squad temporarily changing to a wider training group until after six months of international competition to provide a broader support to players and reach more players for the 2021-22 Backing the Best and sports aid places. This will involve up to 16 to begin with and will fluctuate depending on players overall performances and improvements.
- The England Skills Awards will be launched in Q1 2021 and be available to all licensed coaches on Moodle.
- ITTF calendars due out in December 2020.
- We will be working with parents in Sport to develop support and resources for players' parents in the pathway.

Challenges/Issues

The issues continue:

- The return from a second lockdown and the regional limitations enable some but not all training
- Olympic qualification impact- process and dates outlined but now likely to change.



Departmental Reports

Operations & Governance – Joanna Keay-Blyth

Information/Activities - Last Period

The last quarter has seen the teams continue to work from home with only a 4-week period where we allowed team members who were struggling at home to return to the office, but with Covid 2.0 we were forced to close the offices again and they have remained closed for the remainder of the period.

With the furlough scheme extended until the end of April we are trying to balance the financial assistance that provides whilst ensuring we have sufficient capacity to continue to deliver what we need to do.

Memberships have slowed down drastically, and we now sit at 54.6% of total paid members against last year and 58.4% of all members. The decision was made due to the limited possibility of competitions being undertaken to refund Compete Plus Members the add on to the Compete Membership and to date we have processed 128 refunds so approx. 10% have requested a refund. We are extremely grateful to all the members that have chosen not to take up that offer.

Safeguarding

We are currently reviewing all our safeguarding guidelines, policy and procedures and we are looking to undertake some training in the new year once they are reviewed and finalised.

Governance

An external board evaluation was undertaken during this period by Sport and Recreation Alliance and the Board will be reviewing the actions in the new year.

A thorough review and reformatting of the Risk Register was undertaken, and further reviews will take place at the next Board Meeting in March.

A Conflicts of Interest policy has been approved by the Board for the whole organisation and it can be found via the link below. If there are any further feedback do let me know.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Conflicts-of-Interest-Policy-November-2020.pdf>

TT Leagues

Continued development of the platform happened throughout this period, including the development of the competition's elements for Clubs.

We are also trialling the system for other competitions such as County Championships and NJL/NCL for future use. Using technology to improve the running of competitions aids both volunteers and players.

Departmental Reports

Information/Activities – Current/Future

EGM

During this period there was a call to hold an EGM and preparations are underway to organise this in the new year. The date for the EGM is 25 January at 7pm and it will be held via zoom.

Operations

We will be continuing to follow Government guidance and supporting our staff, members, clubs and leagues in the new year.

Challenges/Issues

1. The ongoing challenges of Covid 19 which the teams are working through to ensure we continue to support our clubs, leagues and counties through this difficult time.
2. Reduction in membership renewals due to uncertainty of returning to play and balancing the financial impact.

Actions from National Council Meeting 10th October 2020

<u>Action</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>When</u>
Any declarations of interests to be emailed to JKB / VE	ALL	ASAP
GY presentation to be available to everyone	GY	Completed
National Councillors to undertake further consultation on the future format of meetings and 'select committees'	EW	Completed

In Memoriam

Bob Stannard

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-bob-stannard/>

Ron Bayliss

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-ron-bayliss-draycott-long-eaton-ttc-founder/>

Eric Todd

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/obituary-eric-todd-batts-founder/>



Departmental Reports

Mass Report – Lucy Franklin

Activity and Updates

With localised tiered lockdowns and more recently lockdown 2.0 being announced, it has been a challenging time over this period. In summary, we have been working closely with our Ping! partner network, continuing to understand how shopping centres are adapting to the changing situation and will continue to work closely with clubs, whilst generating ideas of how we engage and cross-promote our mass and core participation work.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/john-delighted-to-take-path-from-parlour-to-club/>

At the beginning of September, we continued to see some positive results with Ping! Pong Parlours slowly re-opening. We had a total of three Parlours in operation by the end of October, and had four more in the pipeline to open in November – December. This was put on hold due to lockdown 2.0. However, after restrictions were lifted early December we have now seen three Parlours re-open which is positive news, including one completely new Parlour

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/featured-news/wandsworth-welcomes-a-new-parlour/> .

We have communicated with local leagues in the areas that these Parlours have opened, along with engaging our club officers to communicate the openings to clubs in the areas. We continue to investigate the opportunities that have raised due to increasing number of empty units in shopping centres around the country and remain optimistic. Our main goal is to focus on rebuilding versus expansion of Parlours due to covid-19 impact.

We continue to work closely with Ping! partners to provide local communities with table tennis during the Coronavirus pandemic, and host regular support webinars to provide updates and showcase examples of best practice.

- We have finalised our Leisure Provider Offer and have interest of David Lloyd, Everyone Active & Freedom Leisure, which we will pick up again once restrictions are lifted.
- It is likely we will be supporting another phase of the Fred Perry initiative in Spring 2021, introducing outdoor locations adding to <https://www.fredperry.com/quarterly/court-finder>. We have had initial conversations and have expressed our enthusiasm to assist and will continue these conversations into the new year
- **Sport England:** At the end of October, we submitted our YR4 mid-year review to Sport England, which was well received. We will continue to use the Impact Report as a platform to share the effect of Coronavirus on our sport and those who participate, but also demonstrate our responsiveness to the changing landscape through the creation of Play At Home initiatives and Return To Play guidance.

Challenges and Roadblocks

It is noticeably clear that we have had various challenges and roadblocks over the past months, however we will continue to measure our impact and also, investigate different ways we can engage and re-engage and re-build the mass market. This will likely involve some external research to better our understanding of how behaviours and people's needs and wants have potentially changed due to the pandemic.

Departmental Reports

With lockdown being so uncertain and different tiers introduced across the country, it does impact staff motivation. There is so much work behind the scenes and we make inroads, however then a lockdown is introduced. We will continue to carry on and support staff's well-being during this uncertain time.





Departmental Reports

Development & Volunteering – Greg Yarnall

Information/Activities - Last Period

Information/Activities - Last Period

The new development structure has now been put in place

- One member of staff, Mark Willerton, took voluntary redundancy
- We appointed Lauren Evans into the Youth Participation Officer role
- Craig Bryant joined the coaching team (replacing Sally Shutt who retired to France earlier in the year)
- With the current financial picture uncertain, it was agreed to delay the recruitment of the Adult Participation Officer role until the new year. Jack Grundy has taken on some of this work in the interim, whilst the Ping Pong Parlour work is quiet.
- We also held a webinar in November open to all members, where we went through the new structure and ways of working. You can find a link to the recording here <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/webinar-our-new-development-team-structure/>

A participation survey was launched in the w/c 23rd November, which received over 1400 responses and looked at:

- The impact of Covid-19 on our members participation in the sport
- Views from participants connected to local league structures
- Participants views about the diversity of our sport

TT Kidz:

- TT Kidz for schools launched in September and there are currently over 20 schools that have now purchased a school's pack.
- TT Kidz award scheme will launch in early October, which is a very exciting next step for the programme. Eight clubs are going to be starting testing and delivery of the awards from January.
- TT Kidz 8-week programmes will again be running from February with tiered restrictions allowing U18 participation at all tiers.

We have increased our support and the opportunities available to licensed coaches, you could find more info here <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/were-stepping-up-our-support-for-licensed-coaches/>

Diversity - A sub group has been established to review and rework the diversity action plan. This sub group includes two Board members, two MAG members, two people from British Para TT and Table Tennis England staff representatives. The group has now met three times and the aim is to re-launch the diversity action plan by April 2021.

We continue to provide dedicated support to all clubs, leagues, and coaches to support them in their return and the team are having numerous conversations a day with our members.

The COVID-19 Activation fund was re-opened following lockdown 2.0 and an additional 25 clubs and leagues are being provided with up to £500 worth of funding each, this is in addition to the 40 clubs and leagues that were provided with funding after lockdown 1.0.



Departmental Reports

The Pride of Table Tennis awards received over 150 nominations this year, which have now gone to regional committees to select their regional chairs and will forward to the national awards in the New Year.

We have now conducted player, club and league surveys, all of which have helped inform our support packages for our members over the previous few months and for months to come.

The new schools offer packages have been launched to help schools gain access to discounted table tennis packages. <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/clubs/schools/our-schools-offer/>

The Young Ambassador programme has been re-launched for this season <https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/archived/young-ambassador-programme-going-strong-into-third-year/>

Information/Activities – Current/Future

Lockdown 2.0 prevented some of our coach education courses re-starting, but these have now been scheduled for late February/March to restart

Both schools' events (team and individual) have now been cancelled but a virtual school's competition is being planned for 2021 to ensure we continue to engage and offer a competitive opportunity for schools.

We are still actively planning for the National Club, League, Volunteer and Coaching Conference, currently scheduled for 5th and 6th June, which will also host the Pride of Table Tennis awards. We will continue to constantly review the feasibility of this event.

Challenges/Issues

Many clubs are still unable to access their facilities and despite whether they are able to operate effectively through the tier system, 50% of clubs are still not in a position to open. We are supporting clubs and leagues as much as possible to help them find alternative spaces and look at solutions to get started again. There have also been a number of clubs that have accessed the latest Sport England funding round, receiving up to £10k.

Departmental Reports



Competitions and Events – Neil Rogers

Information/Activities - Last Period

Information/Activities - Last Period

COVID has continued to have a sizeable impact on Departmental staffing/ capacity, and we remain at just 40% normal levels. We have suspended recruitment for unfilled posts, with one current post still on furlough.

COVID-response processes remain ongoing, and the primary focus of current work programmes:

- submitted proposal to Board in response to COVID restrictions October 2020
- agreed with Board [major changes to competition programme](#) Jan-March 2021, together with license refunds and [extension of stop/ go policy dates](#) for post-xmas events
- led working party and extensive process to consider viability of and revised format for [Snr National Championships, which Board have agreed to postpone](#)
- [rolling stop/ go decisions](#) and comms on remaining events, including cancellation of NCL/ NJL and [County Championships](#)
- ongoing input into [COVID guidelines](#) at Stage IV (with Development team), actively exploring potential variants, and filtering/ sense-checking evolving Gov't advice for TTE competitions
- ongoing support and dialogue with sanctioned [events now able to take place at 1* level](#)
- ongoing liaison regarding the viability of remaining rounds for (Senior) British League

Following in-principle agreement by Board in June, a programme of statistical modelling has begun for the next stage of the Rankings project. A further phase of membership consultation on a handful of specific considerations will take place in December/ January

Engaged with the Operations team to assist with review and update of player suspension procedures (arising from competition sanctions)

Supported the new members of the Tournament Approval Panel (TAP) to make positive progress in respect of working processes, reviewing procedures, updating support documentation, and publishing the [draft 21/22 calendar](#)

Information/Activities – Current/Future

- Essential functionality has now been successfully established for online Tournament Sanctioning and Entry via the Sport:80 membership portal; wider input is now sought from stakeholders at a meeting scheduled in December
- Following some minor development work and testing in order to be able to host NCL/ NJL and County Champs on the TT Leagues platform as from 21/22, a number of meetings with Roca (and with the kind assistance of Neil Hurford) have also taken place to map-out and spec what is required for British League to transition onto TT Leagues for season 21/22. This is now the expected option
- Following agreement of a project brief by Board in June, substantive progress on a Competitions Review has been impacted by COVID and changing priorities/ capacity. A revised timeframe has



Departmental Reports

been agreed by Board, with an expectation that the review will start in early 2021

- TE has agreed to endorse and actively support the 'Gratitude Games' in 2021, formerly the UK Emergency Services Games. Due to COVID the 2020 event has been postponed and now expanded to include NHS workers. The Table Tennis event is two days competition (midweek, 08 & 09 Sept 2021) in Loughborough, immediately following the UK School Games at the same site and by the same event delivery company. We will appoint a referee and umpires, and provide a competition manager role. It is anticipated that a public announcement will be made soon in conjunction with the wider event launch

Challenges/Issues

- The ENG men's European Championships qualifying match, scheduled at home for October, was postponed by the ETTU. Alternative dates in January '21 for a revised format have been provisionally proposed, but do not require TTE to host any matches
- A change to the definition of ITTF youth age-groups as from April '21, most notably extending the upper bracket of Junior from U18 to U19, has a variety of implications for TTE age-groups (competition eligibility, memberships, ranking age-groups, performance squad etc). Board have agreed a position on this principal, and discussions with stakeholder groups will take place in early 2021



Departmental Reports

Marketing & Comms – Lucy Franklin

Information/Activities last period

Website and brand refresh

We are on track to deliver the new website by Q1 2021. We have successfully completed the current website hosting transfer, technical scope document, site mapping and user journeys. We are now in the process of wireframe development content and page management review.

Our tone of voice work has begun, to create consistency across our all TTE brands and we are finalising new brand guidelines for the Table Tennis England brand.

Digital:

We have begun a digital review across all digital channels and brands, to better understand our current engagement levels and position. We also have started to create a benchmarking report, so we can continuously monitor our performance against similar sized brand/sports, whilst also having aspiration goals.

Marketing and Communications Strategy:

The final draft Marcomms strategy is complete, was presented to board in December. The strategy has been created to act as solid foundation and will enable us to further evolve our brand and our sport.

Membership Engagement

Complete Plus refund: The Marcomms team delivered various communications to members over emails, website, and social channels to detail our refund offer due to competition cancelation.

Ongoing engagement: we have provided various ongoing updates to our members over the past period with any return to play announcements and other COVID-19 related updates over email, social media and our website.

Partnerships

- **Mark Bates Ltd:** our campaign '[Insurance the Supports our Sport](#)' was launched in early November, promoting insurance offers to our membership base. We filmed content of our players just before the local lockdown begun was introduced, which were edited and provided to Mark Bates Ltd. for their use.
- **#Save Our Sports campaign:** In September, we announced our support for the [#Saveoursports campaign](#). We contacted our club network to request [stories](#) to support this campaign and have recently shared the stories this on our channels. We also generated case studies to provide to UK active to complement their campaign. The petition is nearly at 50,000 so there is more work to do from all sports involved to continue to promote.



Departmental Reports

- **ITTF World Cup, ITTF Finals:** working closely with ITTF, we managed to secure a free to air broadcaster, [Free Sports](#) so the table tennis community could enjoy watching live table tennis again. We delivered various content across our digital platforms and also arranged an interview on BBC World 18/11/2020 <https://youtu.be/XG0JCuKxfFs>
- **Coronavirus communications:** our department continues to provide support across the organisation supporting promotion of resources, webinars, Return to Play updates and general communications to our various stakeholders.

Challenges/Roadblocks

LinQsport app – partnership launch: we were due to announce our partnership with LinQsport early November, but due to lockdown 2.0 we had to delay this announcement as we felt it was not the right time to be promoting catching up with friends and playing.

We did manage to launch the partnership once the lockdown restrictions were lifted early December.

Departmental Reports

Finance -Sam Garey



With still so much uncertainty due to Covid-19, it makes it difficult to forecast accurately. We continue to monitor the financial impact that Covid-19 will have on the organisation in 20/21 and beyond, with the biggest risk still coming from a drop in membership renewals.

At this stage we still do not know what the final membership renewal level will be for 20/21, but it is currently at approximately 54% of the previous membership season and renewals have all but stopped. As advised in the paper for the last meeting, the reduction in membership income also impacts the next financial year. At the moment we are expecting at least a £60k reduction in membership income because of this in 21/22.

We previously reported that we had forecast a surplus in 20/21 by identifying savings where possible to try and mitigate the expected reduction in membership renewals.

The following table shows where we have managed to save some expenditure costs over the past 6 months due to government restrictions, which are included in the Q2 actuals and updated year end forecast.

	Net Impact
Rent	£ 11,250.00
Committee costs	£ 25,513.00
Staff expenses	£ 44,770.00
*Cancelled competitions	£ 38,192.00
Total	£ 119,725.00

*This is the change between the Q1 and Q2 competition forecasts, as the majority of competitions have now been cancelled.

Due to the most recent government lock down, the changes to the Tier systems and the restrictions that entails, as well as reduced membership renewals, income has been reduced in the following areas:

- Competition entry fees
- Ranking and tournament levies
- National Championships sponsorship

Departmental Reports

Please see below the previously advised forecast at Q1 and the revised year end forecast at the end of Q2.



Forecast at Q1		Forecast at Q2	
Total Income	3,240,800	Total Income	2,920,768
Total Expenditure	3,118,956	Total Expenditure	2,871,032
Surplus/(Deficit)	121,844	Surplus/(Deficit)	49,736

While we are currently forecasting a surplus of £49,736 as the year end position, this is likely to change over the coming months. This change will depend on the restrictions in place and how soon normal activity can resume.

It should be noted that since the Q2 forecast was updated, we are now likely to incur additional legal costs in connection with both the investigation and the EGM fees in excess of £15,000. This will negatively impact the above yearend forecasted surplus.

The scenario planning continues to be reviewed based on government guidelines and is reviewed by the executives, the finance committee, and the Board regularly.