



COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Council meeting held in Michael Tippet Room, Staff House, University of Birmingham, B15 2TP at 1030 on Saturday, 17 November 2018.

PRESENT

Council Members

Richard Bickers (Avon)	Vicki Turner (Lincolnshire)
Seamus Singh (Avon)	Andrew Beeston (Merseyside)
Sandy Burnett (Berkshire)	Jim Foggitt (Merseyside)
Heidi Leseur (Buckinghamshire & Board Member)	Mike Broadbent (Northamptonshire)
Alan Batchelor (Cheshire)	Martin Sawyer (Northamptonshire)
Mike Batte (Cornwall)	Colin McNestrie (Northumbria)
Jo Wallis (Derbyshire)	Alec Livingstone (Suffolk)
Brian Duke (Durham & Cleveland)	Patrick Fleming (Surrey)
Dave Neller (Essex)	Colin Watson (Surrey)
Gerard L'aimable (Kent)	Paul Millman (Sussex & President)
Bernie Gill (Lancashire)	Nigel Orrett (Warwickshire)
Cindy Gill (Lancashire)	Mike Stannard (Wiltshire)
Rachel Calver (Leicestershire)	John Parkes (Worcestershire)
Simon Rolington (Leicestershire)	Mike Clemson (Yorkshire)
	Peter Keen (Yorkshire)

Other Board Members

Joy Carter (Chair)
Mark Jeffreys
Wendy Newlove
Eamonn O'Rourke
Paul Trott
Keir Worth (CEO)

IN ATTENDANCE

Richard Antcliff

England Squash Vice Presidents

Barbara Sanderson
Zena Wooldridge

England Squash

Paul Barrett (Project Manager – Membership)
Steve Jones (Minute Taker)
Paul Makinen (Head of Marketing & Insight)

Chris Peach (National Education & Pathways Manager)
 Louise Perry (Director of Finance & Operations)
 Linda Taylor (Head of Strategic Partnerships)
 Mark Williams (Partnerships & Programmes Director)

		ACTION
1.	<p>Chair’s Welcome</p> <p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from Cumbria, Hampshire, Herefordshire, Hertfordshire and Middlesex, as well as from Vice Presidents D. Kandiah and J. Tuomey, and the Board members K. Bedwell, N. Donald, A. Light, M. Pullen and J. Singer.</p> <p>Board Update</p> <p>Joy Carter (JC) welcomed everyone to the meeting, highlighting that it was a different type of Council meeting because there was much more in the way of group discussion planned.</p> <p>JC updated Council on the recent work of the England Squash Board, who continue to be generous with their time. Also, since the last Council meeting, Mark Jeffreys had joined the Board.</p> <p>Mark Jeffreys introduced himself and summarised his background as Director of Sport and Physical Activity at Birmingham City University and his previous involvement with England Squash, supporting/advising on talent, high performance and coach development.</p> <p>JC updated Council on recent Board activity, noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Sustainability documents had been approved by Board • The Board had approved a ‘What England Squash Does’ poster • A proposal for a new England Squash Magazine had been approved • The Board was looking at key innovations and opportunities for squash • Board members had been very busy across the business, evaluating progress and involved with strategic developments, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Articles / Squash System Working Group ○ Membership Working Group ○ Coaching Working Group ○ Digital Steering Group ○ Code of Conduct & Complaints Procedure Group ○ Safeguarding training 	

<p>2.</p>	<p>CEO Update</p> <p>Keir Worth (KW) said that he was looking forward to the new format for Council and the increased opportunity for discussion. KW highlighted the wealth of papers that were shared before the meeting to update Council and then introduced the England Squash staff who were present.</p> <p>It was noted that the squash landscape had changed significantly. Reduced funding, a much smaller organisation, changing needs of consumers and court closures had impacted. Encouragingly, the latest data shows that 1.2m people are playing squash at least once a year, which represents an increase. A key question for stakeholders to consider was in terms of how England Squash can remain relevant in this changing landscape.</p> <p>Appreciation was shown to everyone in attendance and to those involved in the various working groups, which were said to be spread far and wide across the country and to be having a positive impact.</p> <p>Council was then provided with an update on some of the key developments since the last meeting, notably the National Championships moving from Manchester to Nottingham and an imminent announcement regarding the Allam British Open.</p> <p>Offering some reflections, KW said that he felt there had been real change over the last period, particularly with regards to increasing (and increasingly transparent) involvement with Council. People have different opinions and are passionate in wanting to see squash flourish, so some conflict was said to be inevitable but also healthy. Ultimately there is a sharing of common values.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Strategic Review of the Squash System</p> <p>JC welcomed Paul Millman (PM) and Andrew Beeston (AB), highlighting that PM had been leading with support from AB, Patrick Fleming and other Working Group members on some positive discussions around the development of a strong ‘Squash System’ – one that can help strengthen relationships and impact positively on the organisation of the game.</p> <p>AB provided a short summary of his background in squash and suggested that a “checklist” of what England Squash can provide by way of assistance to County Associations may be of value.</p> <p>Council members in attendance were seated around six separate tables for the purpose of discussion related to the following two questions:</p> <p>Q1) What are the critical success factors of the approach proposed in the paper?</p> <p>Q2) Should Council seek additional representation (from other stakeholders) on Council? If so, who? E.g. clubs/facilities, referees, coaches...</p>	

<p>4.</p>	<p>Some of the key points from each table were presented, and the attached appendix contains the full, collated notes from the discussions of the six tables combined.</p> <p>Programmes Strategy (Participation)</p> <p>JC thanked Chris Vine, who was unable to attend the meeting, for his continued input into this area on behalf of CAN. Developing participation is a crucial area of work and it is an area funded by Sport England, with whom a strong relationship is maintained. JC introduced Mark Williams (MW), who presented some slides providing an update on Participation.</p> <p>The 1.2m people playing squash at least once a year is a big opportunity in terms of engaging with as many of those people as possible in order to encourage and enable them to play more often.</p> <p>It was noted that, although many sports are seeing declining numbers of participants, the physical activity sector is thriving. The popularity of the Strava network, for example, was felt to show the importance of a technologically-enabled connection between participants. Similarly, CrossFit and Ninja Warrior excel at creating communities.</p> <p>MW said, when asked about the likely launch date of Junior 101 on the England Squash app, that it will be ready by spring 2019. MW confirmed that data can be added retrospectively to the app so long as the data was collected during the current funding cycle, i.e. since April 2017, and that the set targets are to be achieved by 31 March 2021.</p> <p>Heidi Leseur highlighted the fact that the app is coach-led and that coaches have to be trained to use it.</p> <p>MW presented a slide with three questions for discussion by Council.</p> <p>Q1) What is the best possible delivery strategy for the programmes across the country?</p> <p>Q2) What role can County Associations play in developing the creation of a strong delivery network to support the achievement of Sport England targets?</p> <p>Q3) How can we get more clubs / coaches / leaders engaged?</p> <p>Some of the key points from each table were presented, and the attached appendix contains the full, collated notes from the discussions of the six tables combined.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>National Safeguarding Strategy</p> <p>JC emphasised that safeguarding is a pertinent and serious issue. There have been several high-profile cases in squash, and the squash community was</p>	

	<p>said to have a collective responsibility to do its best to look after the welfare of young players and vulnerable adults. England Squash are RAG-rated green with the Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) and meet the current standards and expectations of Sport England, but there is more work that needs to be done.</p> <p>There is a safeguarding working group at England Squash and one of its members, Chris Peach, briefed Council on some areas for consideration ahead of a larger item on the agenda for the next meeting.</p> <p>A paper had been distributed in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed that Council members would provide contact details to England Squash of their County Association safeguarding officers. This information can be sent to SafeSquash@englandsquash.com.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Innovation & Development</p> <p>JC handed over to Heidi Leseur (HL) to introduce this item. HL explained that innovation was change and went on to show some slides of squash innovation in the likes of Buenos Aires (Youth Olympics) and a huge squash development in Poland, along with graphics representing PayPal and pay-as-you-play squash. It was also noted that some innovations are now becoming the norm – LED lighting and glass walls, for instance.</p> <p>Council members were then given time at their tables to consider the following two questions.</p> <p>Q1) What local innovations are Council aware of in their area?</p> <p>Q2) What can County Associations and clubs do to innovate, and what would the outcomes be?</p> <p>Some of the key points from each table were presented, and the attached appendix contains the full, collated notes from the discussions of the six tables combined.</p> <p>This item will be brought back for further discussion at the next meeting and at upcoming Board meetings.</p>	<p>Council members</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p><i>KPIs</i></p> <p>JC said that KPIs are looked at for every Board meeting and will be shared with Council at the next meeting. Trends in participation will also be presented.</p> <p><i>Mike Clemson</i></p>	<p>KW, next mtg</p>

It was noted that Mike Clemson (Yorkshire SRA and CAN Coordinator) is to stand down from involvement with CAN in order to focus more on local matters. JC gave her thanks to Mike for his valuable work and for inspiring and challenging England Squash along the way.

Bernie Gill (Lancashire) pointed out that hearing speakers at the other side of the room is difficult at times. Steve Jones to look into the potential use of a microphone for the next meeting.

The meeting closed and was followed by the AGM (see separate minutes).

Signed...  (Chair)

Date.....10/01/2019.....

**Steve Jones,
next mtg**



Council meeting notes – 17 December 2018

The following constitutes the collated notes from the discussions that took place at each of the six tables at the meeting.

Agenda item 3. Strategic Review of the Squash System

Q1) What are the critical success factors of the approach proposed in this paper?

- Common understanding across all stakeholders
- Good communication both ways including more substantive Board minutes
- Consultation & aggregated feedback
- Make sure County Associations (CAs) feel valued and included
- Ensure clarity of the role of Regional Forums (RFs), National Forum (NF) and Council
- Help to set up RFs organically. Some RFs work well currently, others do not. If a RF is not working well, maybe join forces with another, or create a sub-region.
- Need to consolidate and work together and share best practice
- Need to ensure CAs are fit for purpose
- Must ensure more young people are involved
- A weakness is the expectation/demands on volunteers
- The NF is not currently working
- CAN is not included. It should be, and it should replace the NF
- Too many layers of bureaucracy, for already stretched volunteers
- Better for England Squash to engage directly with CAs re. funding proposals
- Are RFs relevant?
- Funding should go directly to CAs and they can decide who they work with
- Must be clear how the system will connect with clubs

An example of success is the South East, who undertook a SWOT analysis on their CAs to understand what they were doing well and what improvements were required. This helped them to implement a formal development plan and structure.

Q2) Should Council seek additional representation (from other stakeholders) on Council? If so, who? E.g. clubs/facilities, referees, coaches

- No - County Engagement Days are the best forum for additional input
- Could have an invitation for specific topics when they arise e.g. coaches, juniors
- Feeling that the CAs should be representative of all parties anyway so not really any need for further representation
- Who else would reasonably come? Would any one of those groups care enough?
- Should consider other stakeholders, e.g. PSA, coaches, leisure centre providers, universities



- Need to build a more diverse council, e.g. age, gender, ethnicity
- There is a need for other perspectives, but does this need to be permanent or just when needs arise?

Agenda item 4. Programmes Strategy (Participation)

Q1) What is the best possible delivery strategy for the programmes across the country?

- How do we adjust activities so that they can be recorded on the app?
- How do we embed the app within delivery?
- Ensure the essence of squash is captured, e.g. fun
- Talk to people in the way they want to engage, e.g. through social media
- Cater for everyone - if they just want to do 101 and not progress to boxes, leagues, tournaments, etc. then so what?
- Using social media is critical
- Focus on retention, which is hard
- How to serve those who don't get to competitive squash?
- Understand what people want and what the market is doing, including where facilities are at risk of closure
- Have a pathway, i.e. where do players go after the programmes?
- Technology – market-competitive activities through fitness trackers
- Support coaches to use the app and improve their engagement
- Leader board for participants, and incentives for players, coaches, counties, clubs
- Can we provide a simple spreadsheet for counties to capture previous programme activity for easy upload of retrospective data?
- Use CAs to increase engagement
- Link with external partners, e.g. This Girl Can, WI, Girl Guides, SQ57- React, UA3
- Promotion to non-England Squash coaches – we need to encourage them to engage to get them into our system
- Having an effective team of deliverers, like a sales force to help hit targets together and then when one is struggling the others help them out
- Creating communities
- How do we convey the sport to our target markets? How do we make it appeal?
- Delivery agencies are marketeers, they need to be given tools to market

Q2) What role can County Associations play in developing the creation of a strong delivery network to support the achievement of Sport England targets?

- Need to ensure that CAs act as the conduit for communication
- Confusion over what the programmes were and how to implement them

Q3) How can we get more clubs / coaches / leaders engaged?



- What's in it for the coach? How do we motivate the coach?
- CAs need a paid resource / development officer
- ES to help with marketing, as individual bids all currently include marketing costs. If there were ES marketing avenues available, then the fund could be better spent on the projects
- How about having app available for players as well as coaches?

Agenda item 6. Innovation & Development

Q1) What local innovations are Council aware of in their area?

Q2) What can County Associations and clubs do to innovate and what would the outcomes be?

- Video / streaming within club
- Free / discounted food & drink at club night
- Fun doubles format – rotating different pairs
- Junior league format for adults: Super-Squash Saturday (one day of boxes / best of three)
- Funded 1-day tournament using mixed genders and ages - all play against one another for 15 minutes and rack up points during the day
- Father-and-son day and fancy dress
- Business networking at squash club, e.g. one afternoon per month for business people to attend and play each other.
- All-levels squash competition during quiet periods. Handicap applied to make it more competitive
- Linking activity to Fitbits
- Group online community – maybe by age group
- Pop up walls / mini walls for sports halls
- Lower cost flexible courts like a pop-up system (easy up and easy down)
- Use of PayPal for tournament entry, payment of coaching fees, etc. – promotes lower dropout rates
- Speed squash sessions, e.g. for club nights – can be made competitive
- Activity charts like those used for rowing challenges in gyms
- Use of WhatsApp groups for entry forms and other communication
- Squash wall knocked down and replaced with glass
- New coffee machine
- Concept: Squash4x4, with teams of four for 90 mins, and every point counts, which makes it particularly competitive
- Cup system for summer league
- 3-team games
- Regional play-offs with a finals night
- Introduce kids into competitive structures
- Online booking
- Converting lights to LED



- CAs can bring externals outside of squash to help develop the sport, e.g. event managers
- Instant scoring using a mobile app
- Reduction in price of interactive squash by working together