



COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Council meeting held online via the Zoom video conference application at 10:00 on Thursday, 20 June 2024.

PRESENT

Council Members

Simon Street (Berkshire)
Julian Holmes (Buckinghamshire)
Matt Harford (Cornwall)
Vic Malysz (Derbyshire)
Jo Wallis (Derbyshire)
Nicholas Collins (Durham)
David Neller (Essex)
Jonathan Graham (Hampshire)
Louisa Dalwood (Hertfordshire)
Nigel Pope (Kent)

Bernard Gill (Lancashire)
Andrew Beeston (Merseyside)
Tim Taylor (Middlesex)
John Thompson (Northumbria)
Andrew Wilson (Oxfordshire)
Patrick Fleming (Surrey)
Colin Watson (Surrey)
Mo Sarwar (Warwickshire)
Nicholas Carter (Worcestershire)

IN ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Joy Carter (Chair)
Heidi Leseur
Wendy Newlove
Mark Williams (CEO)

President

Paul Millman

Vice-Presidents

Barbara Sanderson
Zena Wooldridge

England Squash

Neil Edgar (Finance Director)
Steve Jones (minutes)
Paul Makinen (Head of Digital & Insight)
Chris Robertson (Head of Performance Operations)
Jo Rowbottom (Head of Partnerships & Communities)
Lucy Townley (Talent Pathway Manager)

| MINUTES REF. | ITEM | ACTION |
|--------------|--|--------|
| M01ESC(2401) | 1. Chair's Welcome Joy Carter (JC), England Squash Chair, welcomed everyone to the Council meeting and covered some housekeeping matters including how to ask questions on Zoom and the need for attendees to have their name and county association on display. | |
| M02ESC(2401) | The England Squash team present at the meeting along with the President, Vice President and Board members were then introduced to Council. | |
| M03ESC(2401) | <i>Apologies for absence</i> Apologies were received from Vice Presidents Jackie Robinson and Joyce Tuomey, as well as from Board member Nick Murrills and from Jo Rowbottom, Head of Partnerships & Communities. | |
| M04ESC(2401) | <i>Declarations of interests</i> There were no interests declared. | |
| M05ESC(2401) | <i>Minutes of the Council Meeting of 15 Nov 2023</i> The minutes of the previous meeting were taken as read and were agreed as a true and correct record. | |
| M06ESC(2401) | <i>Board Update</i> Since the previous Council meeting the Board met three times. Recent work and topics of discussion included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of a Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan • Guidance on the forthcoming new membership and club affiliation scheme (see agenda item 3) • Direction on identification of specific audiences within the 'young people' demographic • Approval of documents to ensure compliance with the new Code for Sports Governance • Provided guidance on financial matters such as reserves policy • Influenced the overall look and feel of England Squash's marketing campaigns | |
| M07ESC(2401) | 2. CEO Update England Squash CEO Mark Williams (MW) updated Council on a wide range of topics. | |
| M08ESC(2401) | <i>Olympic Games</i> | |

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| | <p>It was noted that the current expectation for the squash event at Los Angeles 2028 is that Great Britain will be represented in singles competition by two male players and two female players.</p> | |
| M09ESC(2401) | <p><i>Commonwealth Games</i></p> <p>There has been uncertainty around the Games, with the host city not currently confirmed, and it is not known whether squash will be one of the sports involved.</p> | |
| M10ESC(2401) | <p><i>General Election</i></p> <p>Sport in Great Britain may well have some different priorities following the election, especially should there be a change of Government, and it's a case of wait and see.</p> | |
| M11ESC(2401) | <p><i>Staffing</i></p> <p>Recent new additions to the England Squash team include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah Ward, Safeguarding, Culture & Wellbeing Manager • National Coach (an announcement of Stuart Crawford was imminent) • Tom Outteridge, Content Manager <p>Notably Sarah Ward in her role will be a useful resource for county associations.</p> | |
| M12ESC(2401) | <p>3. Membership & Affiliation</p> <p>This item was presented by Paul Makinen, Head of Digital & Insight, who picked out the key points from the paper he had shared with Council in advance of the meeting.</p> | |
| M13ESC(2401) | <p>Following discussion, there was agreement that promoting 'What England Squash Does' as part of the marketing of membership is important.</p> | PM |
| M14ESC(2401) | <p>There followed some discussion of county rebates and in response to a query about the level of the Enhanced Rebate for different membership types, it was confirmed that the level will be 20% across all player memberships regardless of type.</p> | |
| M15ESC(2401) | <p>The subject of cross-border clubs was then discussed, i.e. clubs that are located in one county but play league squash in a different county. Potentially there could be an option on the Club Dashboard allowing clubs to select the county that receives their rebate contribution. England Squash will look at this.</p> | PM |
| M16ESC(2401) | <p>4. Coach Education Pathway</p> | |

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| M17ESC(2401) | <p>MW introduced this item. England Squash recently kicked off a project to refresh the coach education pathway. The objective is to ensure that coaches and leaders are better trained and supported to deliver all levels of squash activities.</p> <p>MW then invited discussion in small groups and shared the following question to help guide the conversations.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Q: What key topics, support or resources do you think should be included in the coach education pathway to develop an excellent coaching workforce?</p> <p>The following are the collated key points and ideas from those discussions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keen to see the pathway allowing for 'innovation' i.e. not being overly prescriptive • Can England Squash follow-up with new coaches to keep them engaged? • Can England Squash do more to help shape commercial blueprints for coaches seeking to earn a living? • Consider it 'development', not 'education' • Role of mentoring should be considered • Modular approach should be favoured • It's not ideal that L1 coaches can only coach groups • Educate coaches on when to pass on players at the right time • Coaches need business acumen and need to be proactive (and be taught how to be proactive) • Often coaches lack high-level communication skills • Availability of courses – L2 is not online • More content for coaches • Coach education should develop greater links with universities and schools • Recruit and train coaches at university | MW |
| M18ESC(2401) | <p>5. Talent and Performance</p> <p>Chris Robertson (CR), Head of Performance Operations, introduced this item.</p> | |
| M19ESC(2401) | <p>It is recognised that club and county programmes are the lifeblood of the talent pathway. CR then invited discussion in small groups and shared the following question to help guide the conversations.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Q: How can we work together to ensure more young people have the opportunity to access sanctioned competitions and the talent pathway?</p> <p>The following are the collated key points and ideas from those discussions.</p> | MW |

- Could counties join together / work across borders?
- Junior Inter Counties – be careful not to overload the calendar
- Could we ‘sponsor’ PSA events? Could we offer a grant matching programme?
- Parents often have to do a lot of travelling
- More fun / less stressful competitions but still award ranking points
- Introduce ranking points for Aspire team championships and Inter County Championships
- Trial new formats – e.g. ‘Swiss Chess’ format (every player plays every player in a big round robin format)
- More local competitions
- How can squash be more like rugby than football?

M20ESC(2401)

Any Other Business*Sad News*

England Squash Vice President and Hampshire committee member Devan Kandiah passed away in May. Several county associations and employees of England Squash spoke to pay tribute to Devan, who will be very much sadly missed.

M21ESC(2401)

It was also noted that two other well-known people from the sport are currently unwell. Peter Chalk and Keith White have been great supporters of the game for many years and all at Council send their best wishes.

Jo Wallis

The meeting was the last one to be attended by Derbyshire council representative Jo Wallis. The county now has a new chair in Vic Malysz to replace Jo, and JC wished Vic well and thanked Jo for all the excellent work in her county role.

M22ESC(2401)

Council papers not discussed

JC highlighted that several information-only papers as follows had also been shared with Council members and thanked the writers of those papers:

- Commercial and Sponsorship
- Competitions
- Environment and Sustainability
- Inclusion and Diversity
- Marketing & Communications



Signed.....
Joy Carter (Chair)