



COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the Council Meeting held in Goodenough College, London House Large Common Room, Mecklenburgh Square, London, WC1N 2AB at 1300 on Wednesday, 24 May 2017.

PRESENT

Council Members

Seamus Singh (Avon)	Paul Fennell (Middlesex)
Paul Main (Bedfordshire)	Vickie Prow (Middlesex)
Howard Mason (Cambridgeshire)	Martin Pearce (Norfolk)
Alan Batchelor (Cheshire)	Emily Ison (Suffolk)
Mike Batte (Cornwall)	Patrick Fleming (Surrey)
Jonathan Gliddon (Devon)	Paul Millman (Sussex and England Squash Vice President)
Dave Neller (Essex)	Nigel Orrett (Warwickshire)
Geoff Went (Essex)	Peter Goldson (Wiltshire)
David Law (Hampshire)	Bett Dryhurst (Worcestershire)
Peter Newman (Hertfordshire)	Mike Clemson (Yorkshire)
Richard Antcliff (Kent)	Peter Keen (Yorkshire)
Michael Blasdale (Leicestershire)	

Board Members

Joy Carter (Chair)
Nick Donald
Jamie Singer
Keir Worth (also Chief Executive Officer)

England Squash Vice Presidents

Jennifer Barker
Devan Kandiah
Barbara Sanderson

Sport England

Rona Chester
Heather Taylor

England Squash Staff

Gregg Cropper (Competitions Manager [Maternity Cover])
Natalie Davis (National Communities & Programmes Manager)
Steve Jones (Minute Taker)
Paul Makinen (Head of Marketing & Insight)
Chris Peach (National Education & Pathways Manager)
Louise Perry (Director of Finance & Operations)
Chris Robertson (Head of Player Development)
Mark Williams (Partnerships & Programmes Director)

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1.	<p>Chair's Welcome</p> <p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from: Sandy Burnett (Berkshire), Heidi Leseur (Buckinghamshire), Tom Armstrong (Cumbria), Jonathan Brooks (Derbyshire), Jane Smith (Dorset), Brian Duke (Durham & Cleveland), Mark Chamberlain (Herefordshire), Bernie Gill (Lancashire), Jim Foggitt (Merseyside), Mike Broadbent (Northamptonshire), Colin McNestrie (Northumbria), Mike Sheriston (Nottinghamshire), Ian Dinwiddy (Shropshire), Keith Griffiths (Somerset), John Hughes (Surrey); Kate Bedwell, Phil Collins, Gordon Lord, Eamonn O'Rourke, Matt Pullen (all Board members); Bob Johnson, Jackie Robinson, Gordon Ross, Joyce Tuomey and Zena Wooldridge (all Vice Presidents).</p> <p>Declarations of Interests</p> <p>No interests were declared.</p> <p>Minutes of the Council Meeting of 30 November 2016</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were taken as read and were agreed as a true and correct record.</p> <p>Matters Arising</p> <p>It was requested that Council members be notified by e-mail once minutes are added to the website.</p> <p>A request was made for a spelling error in the surname of Michael Oddie to be corrected.</p> <p>Board Update</p> <p>Joy Carter (JC) welcomed all to the meeting, emphasising the need for constructive criticism and an encouraging and supportive two-way relationship between England Squash and Council. She said that she hoped that would be the spirit of the day's meeting.</p> <p>Since the last meeting, the Board had been continuing to challenge, support and empower the executive, working hard on the articles of association and with lawyers to reflect best practice. It was reported that, at the Board meeting the previous day, there had been, amongst other things, discussion of membership, safeguarding and communication.</p> <p>Nominations Panel</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>Minute Taker</p> <p>Minute Taker</p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p>

<p>2.</p>	<p>It was highlighted that, in terms of governance, a Nominations Panel is being formed, looking at Terms of Reference, and volunteers are needed.</p> <p>CEO Update</p> <p>Keir Worth (KW) introduced the England Squash staff, explaining some of the background to the restructure and handing over to executive directors and heads of department for brief explanations of the new teams and roles.</p> <p>A question was raised by Middlesex about the future of the Squash & Racketball Foundation. Mark Williams explained that there will be a meeting with the Foundation's board of trustees soon in order to establish a way forward. It was confirmed that there is money available and that it has been ringfenced for certain Foundation-related projects.</p> <p>KW said that this Council meeting follows a period of active and, in some cases, unfortunate e-mail traffic. He expressed his belief that all in the room are passionate about squash and need to pull in the same direction. It was highlighted that squash does not by any means stand alone in facing challenges.</p> <p>Achievements during the last three years included the rebuilding of the relationship with Sport England and UK Sport (the outcome of which was, over the last two and a half years, an additional £1m in funding above that which was scheduled), a rebrand of the organisation, the appointment of a whole new Board that really challenges the executive, the introduction of a National Forum and Regional Forums (with six-figure investment), major events (including the World Squash Championships), an efficiency review alongside new HR policy and procedures. Sport England has recognised the progress. In addition, it was reported that a digital platform that will be the envy of much larger National Governing Bodies is set to be launched.</p> <p>KW was keen to focus on more proactive communication. He pointed out his belief that communication by e-mail was largely proving unsuccessful because too few people are reading the e-mails, and even fewer are forwarding those e-mails to others. That is something that he said needs to be resolved in order for all to work together more effectively. There is full commitment from his point of view in resolving the issue.</p> <p>KW highlighted just how much Sport England believes in the contribution of the county associations, a viewpoint that is reflected by the investment in the Regional Forums and the National Forum.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>Group Discussion</p> <p><i>Participation Programmes Review</i></p>	

Mark Williams presented an update from the new Partnerships and Programmes team. Discussions moved to the infographic that details the current programmes and campaigns offered by England Squash. The junior pathway was then discussed.

Discussions then moved back to the training of Squash 101 leaders and how this could be undertaken. Some county associations felt that leaders courses could devalue or dilute a level 1 course. It was explained that the leaders course acts as a stepping stone to a level 1, and in most cases has been a good aid at introducing new coaches into the sport. It was also noted that Squash 101 is not coaching but leadership and facilitation in an informal setting. It was reported that having a Squash 101 leaders course does not enable delivery to children. Leaders will need to undertake a level 1 qualification to do this.

Some county associations were unaware of the programme Squash 101, so the motivations and premise were explained.

An issue was raised around coach membership and Squash 101 content, and it was stated that any qualified coach who has a membership would have access to this content as it is part of the level 1 syllabus.

Facility issues were then discussed, with Cornwall giving an example of their new leisure contractors, the impact of which may be the loss of courts. In response it was said that Sport England is supporting on the issue and that more will be done in the future.

Articles of Association

Patrick Fleming of Surrey SRA facilitated a group discussion on the Articles in light of the Sport England requirement for them to be revised as part of the governance code.

In terms of what should constitute a member in the revised Articles, there was feedback along the lines of all stakeholders being included, i.e. encompassing referees, coaches, parents of talent-pathway players etc., but there was also concern that too many different types of members would lead to a rolling set of people when what is needed, particularly for meetings, is some consistency. There was some debate as to whether player members should have voting rights.

There was some uncertainty amongst the group as to what the role of the Council will be in the new set-up once the Articles have been amended. It was felt that there is a need to decide what the role of the Council is, and there was comment in some quarters that these discussions might be more suited to the National Forum.

There was clarity provided to state that there are some items in the Articles that are non-negotiable, such as the make-up of the Board (male/female), and these aspects are commonplace in industry as well now.

<p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>6.</p>	<p>Membership</p> <p>Nick Donald explained his background and spoke about how he came to be added to the Board as a non-executive director. It was noted that the presentation he had prepared for this meeting with Richard Antcliff of Kent SRA was on the back of a consultation at the end of last year.</p> <p>There was acknowledgement that not all counties may wish to adopt the county levy, but it was made clear that there are excellent financial incentives for doing so. The example of Kent SRA’s levy was given: the county raises £20k plus per year.</p> <p>Clarity was provided on the fact that membership will continue to be through club affiliation for the most part, although there will still be direct, individual membership of England Squash available as well, i.e. to those who are not members of affiliated clubs.</p> <p>In terms of access to the revised benefits, it was said that activation online is imperative, and that the driver to encourage people to activate is primarily the insurance aspect in that a member must activate his/her membership in order to be insured.</p> <p>Richard Antcliff went through the insurance in some more detail. It was noted that, if a player was to take out his/her own insurance policy independently, the cost would be £20-25 per year - the cost saving of becoming insured through an England Squash membership is clear.</p> <p>Overall it was felt that the proposal was a compelling and progressive one for players, clubs and counties alike.</p> <p>Cheshire requested that the slides used in the presentation be distributed to county associations.</p> <p>Club & Coaching Summits</p> <p>It was reported that there had been mostly positive feedback and that the summits will run again in the future, with the next one being in Manchester in December. People interested were invited to contact Chris Peach directly for more information.</p> <p>National Forum</p> <p>Mark Williams brought up a slide on the screen to show a graphic of the National Forum, which he explained as needing to change in some areas in order to be a single body representative of county associations. It is also felt that the new-look Forum needs to be an “engagement body” with two-way communication.</p>	<p>Minute Taker</p>
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	<p>The proposal will be circulated to all county associations for feedback before it goes to the Board for sign-off.</p> <p>7. Competitions & Events Update</p> <p>This item was for information, and the two related papers were distributed to all invitees prior to the meeting.</p> <p>8. Hitting the Nick</p> <p>KW spoke about the mission for England Squash as being to revitalise the sport in this country. It was said that some focus over the last 12 months had been lost due to an emphasis on meeting governance and funding requirements imposed by Sport England. Although England Squash does not always get it right, there has been considerable effort to involve county associations as much as possible.</p> <p>KW and Mark Williams went on to pick out some of the highlights of the work England Squash has been involved in over the past 12 months or so.</p> <p>It was commented that the recruitment of staff with backgrounds in other sports enriches rather than detracts from the organisation. It was explained that it had not felt appropriate to discuss sensitive staff issues (employees on gardening leave, etc.) with county associations.</p> <p>It was highlighted that the severity of funding cuts are not related to Key Performance Indicators, <i>all of which were met</i>.</p> <p>Mike Clemson (MC) of the County Association Network and Yorkshire SRA presented the main points of his paper 'Hitting the Nick'. He explained that some consider that the game is not being promoted as effectively as it could be. It is felt that the view amongst some county association personnel is that England Squash pays "lip service" to the counties but then "ploughs its own furrow".</p> <p>To move forward with positivity, MC suggested a joint meeting involving the county associations, the masters committee and England Squash.</p> <p>MC felt that counties should be consulted at the conception stage of an idea rather than half-way through the implementation.</p> <p>JC welcomed constructive criticism and addressed the points raised, giving her full agreement to the issue of consultation from conception in particular.</p> <p>Rona Chester (RC), Chief Operating Officer at Sport England, who was invited to the meeting by KW, was then welcomed to the front of the room to explain the shifting priorities that have occurred over the last 18 months, specifically the release of the Towards an Active Nation strategy as well as the new governance code that was released in November 2016. It was</p>	
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highlighted that the code is mandatory, i.e. if the code is not met, there is no Sport England money for squash. It was said that a lot has happened in a short space of time, and RC expressed her confidence in KW and England Squash.

There was clarification regarding the extract from the Sport England minutes quoted in the Hitting the Nick paper. It was explained that the quote refers to a previous incarnation of England Squash.

It was emphasised that the new strategy is based on maintaining the core market of squash and to do so more efficiently in order to lower the subsidy to the public purse. Across the board, there has been 35% less funding for National Governing Bodies.

RC said that everyone in the room has a role to play in Sport England and we all need to work together better for the common good.

9. **Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

Signed...  (Chair)

Date.....29 June 2017.....