



British Para Table Tennis Abridged Board Meeting Minutes
7th June 2023, English Institute of Sport, Sheffield and via Microsoft Teams

BPTT Board Members Present:

Karen Tonge OBE (Chairman) (KT)
Martin Clark (Financial Director) (MC)
Kim Laws (Senior Independent Director) (KL)
Mel Cheung-Turner (Director) (MCT)
Jaime Morgan Hitchcock (Director) (JMH)
Phil McCallum (Director) (PM)
John Timms (Director) (JT) (via Microsoft Teams for part of the meeting)
Maurice Hammerton (Director) (MH)

In Attendance:

Mike Smith (Advisor to the Board) (MS)
Neil Marples (Acting Company Secretary) (NM)
Louise Larcombe (Minutes) (LL)
Martin Perry (Athlete Rep) (MP) (for part of the meeting)
Thomas Matthews (Athlete Rep) (TM) (for part of the meeting)

1. Welcome (KT)

KT welcomed all including the two athlete representatives, Martin Perry, and Thomas Matthews who will be joining the meeting until lunch.
KT said that this will be her last BPTT Board meeting.
KT has been involved at various levels in BTTAD/BPTT since 1983 coaching a silver medalist; on Performance Management Committee (now monitoring) since 2010 and Chairman since 2014.
All at BPTT would like to thank KT for her dedication over the years and her leadership as Chairman.
KT said that it had been fantastic to see how much the sport has progressed over the years. From a Board of 4 members to where we are today with such a skilful and diverse Board. Originally, in 2015 it was all about medals, however now there are lots of other areas that are also important such as our social and environmental impact, mental health and safeguarding.

2. Apologies (NM) – Rebecca Hembrough (Director) (RH), Catherine Willcocks (Director) (CW).

3. Declaration of Interests (ALL) – PM declared that he is the Marketing Manager for Ransome Sporting Goods. When he joined the meeting, JT declared that his company, MLS GB, are interested in supporting and

delivering BPTT world class events, they are running the European Para Championships in Sheffield in 2023.

4. Minutes of previous meeting held on 1st March 2023 (ALL PRESENT) – Approved.

5. Matters Arising – None.

6. Performance (PM)

a. Strategy Update – Taken as read.

PM highlighted that ambers are changing to green which shows that we are making progress in many areas.

b. BEAA – Athlete Rep recruitment outcome, MOU (LL)

- i. The new athlete reps are Martin Perry and Thomas Matthews. They have both taken part in athlete rep training with the BEAA. They have also both undertaken Mental Health Champion training.

c. Anti-Doping (LL)

- i. No testing has taken place since the last board meeting. UKAD thanked BPTT for participating in Clean Sport Week. 2 of our performance athletes created a video which was shared on UKAD's social media sites.

d. Cultural Feedback Survey Update (LL)

- i. The Cultural Feedback Survey Athlete Insights Report has been added to the board folder. The survey was sent to all BPTT Performance Squad athletes. This presentation includes the questions in the survey whereby a rating was given. It does not include the questions which required a written response. The response rate was 100% and the average score was 7.7 which is a very positive response.

7. Selection (via KT)

a. Report in folder taken as read.

LL advised all re the status of policies, the European Para Table Tennis Championships selection policy, the Paralympic Games selection policy, the updated General World Class Programme selection policy, and the related appeals procedures are currently with the British Elite Athletes Association (BEAA), they will be published on the website and circulated to the Performance Squad as soon as possible as the selection committee meeting to select athletes for the European Para Table Tennis Championships is taking place on the 26th June 2023. As always, this will be a fair process, our BEAA Account Manager and UK Sport PA will be present, as well as the BPA as singles gold medallists automatically qualify for the Paralympic Games. For the first time, all of the coaches will be invited to attend, as well as submitting their recommendations in advance. They will all be independent observers and have no voting rights. KT had raised with new CEO of BPA selection/deselection process for Paralympics as unsatisfactory last



time.

8. International Events

a. European Para Championships 23 update (KT) plus JT

Lots of progress has taken place. We have secured a referee's team, umpires, and a Competitions Manager.

An Advanced Rules Exam will take place for umpires on 3rd September 2023. Chris Newton has been seconded from Table Tennis England to be the Tournament Operations Manager. They have been in discussions re the flooring.

MCT will be on the media sub-group for the tournament. Fran Bullock will be the Press Officer just for GBR.

The aim is for the ticketing information to be released next week.

MP asked will there be an underfloor? Some athletes would like to test the floor. JT replied that the athlete's opinion does affect the decision. A test has already been completed with athletes last month where the initial feedback was that it was good however since then there has been other feedback re the impact of the speed on the table. They are looking into a sub-floor in in the field of play.

MP said that the team have had real growth in the last 11 years therefore what are the steps being taken to maximise the visibility and raising sponsorship for the team as a whole? KT replied that JMH is the Chair of events and that is in his brief however. KT said that BPTT are a charity, and that athletes do a lot of appearances with charities, and they could donate items to the charity account which would help the pathway. MCT added that we are active on social media and there is a sponsorship pack on the website. JMH said that we had a sponsor lined up however it fell through during COVID-19. MP said that athletes get a set number of competitions a year, some athletes qualify for the Paralympic Games within that however some do not and then they have to self-fund for any further competitions. It would be good if these could be funded by a sponsor as we of course want as many athletes as possible qualified for the Paralympic Games. MP asked whether there is scope to reach out to local universities, MCT has done this for the European Para Table Tennis Championships.

MP left the meeting due to other commitments.

MS asked re the accommodation and transport. KT said that progress had been made re this.

TM asked if the athletes could do anything to help raise money. KT said

yes and to discuss with MC. TM suggested also going into hospitals to get more people involved in the sport. KT replied that that would be a good idea. KL suggested speaking to Shaun Marples, BPTT Programme Manager. TM added that it can help when someone with a spinal injury goes to the spinal injury units as they have a lived experience. KT said that UK Sport have offered a grant to have a fan zone at the Euros which the steering group are looking into, this area would be great for fans to meet players and hear their stories. MH mentioned an event that takes place whereby people can have a go at lots of sport, LL asked MH to send over the details. MH ACTION. BPTT did take part in the Parasport event that happened at the EISS earlier on this year. MH said that it is harder to find potential athletes as people with spinal injuries now tend to be in local hospitals rather than specific spinal injury units and wheelchair users are in all schools now rather than at special schools which is where he was approached to join the wheelchair basketball pathway.

b. BPTT Management of Conflict of Interest re E23

KT said that this needs to be in our minds when having discussions at board and that so far, we have been ensuring that the conflict of interest is managed well.

c. Worlds 26 update (KT) plus JT

TTE have submitted a bid to the ITTF to host the Worlds in 2026. Apparently, multiple submissions have been received.

TM left the meeting due to other commitments.

d. Welsh Open 2024, 25, 26 possible Cardiff: Disability Wales events August 2023

We are waiting for advise re the venue and accommodation. GV will go over for a site visit once that happens. A Grand Prix will be taking place at Merthyr Tydfil.

e. Training Camp for ETTU Coaches/Players at Inverclyde with TT Scotland Legacy Event from E23 (KT) plus PM

A training camp has been organised by Table Tennis Scotland in partnership with BPTT, 12-15 October 2023 following funding received. The prospectus has been added to the website, it was originally 13-15 October however it makes more sense to add a day to this event, Richard Yule from Table Tennis Scotland is sending over the revised prospectus.

9. Board (KT)

a. Approval of Committee appointments updates (KT)

The committee structure has been updated; Fran Bullock has come off the Communications Committee. There have also been some slight



changes to the Events Sub-Committee. LL added that Lana Pemberton has sadly handed her notice in as she has been offered a position working from home.

b. Annual Review and the 2023 AGM (NM)

All AGM documents have been circulated to members. There were no proxies or motions for the AGM at 2pm today.

c. Update on relationships and appointment with ITTF, ETTU, UK Sport, Home Nations, S&RA and BPTT (KT)

Scotland have put forward PM to be re-appointed to the ITTF Equipment Committee and MP as sustainability and environment new committee.

KT been put forward for Chair of the ITTF Para Committee by TTE.

PM, Scotland have put him forward for Chair of the ITTF Equipment Committee. The ETTU appointments continue until 2024.

UK Sport are starting the LA process, briefings take place this month.

TTE and British Shooting have both nominated KT again as the Deputy Chair of the Games and Sport Division of Sport and Recreation Alliance.

BPA's new CEO came for a visit last month and KT went to the farewell event for the previous CEO.

MP took part in a Q&A with UK Sport on World Environment Day.

d. IRIS review and planning has been updated following discussions with UK Sport held over the last 12 months.

There will be a meeting of the IRIS sub-group tomorrow as a review meeting required in June.

e. Succession planning – Chairperson recruitment update (KL)

Adele Stach-Kevitz has been appointed by BPTT Board subject to all checks (while KT and LL were not in the room).

On returning KT thanked the Nominations Committee and suggested the Chairperson designate should be co-opted onto the Board once checks were completed as part of the handover, this would give them access to documentation.

10. Governance (KL)

a. UK Sport Award Organisational Health Conditions (KL)

We have been through the items on the code of sports governance with Lucy Moore, Senior Sport Advisor, UK Sport.

A progress meeting has been arranged for July 2023.

We are on track to achieve the requirements by the deadline.

b. Risk Register (KL)

A piece of work still needs to be completed on this. KL ACTION.
All agreed for the Board risks to remain the same.

c. EDI Update (KL, LL)

- i. KL and LL have had a triage meeting with Cashain David, Senior Associate from AKD Solutions. The AGS Consortium (AKD Solutions, The Governance Forum, and Sheffield Hallam University), through UK Sport, are offering BPTT help to develop our Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). Our current DIAP to be reviewed following this meeting BPTT Board has been rated A.

d. Safeguarding (LL)

- i. We have had no safeguarding incidents since the last board meeting.

11. Finance (MC)

a. Update

- i. We have £28,000 in the Michael Hawkesworth fund, as agreed previously, this is being taken out of the Barclays account due to the signatories issue. It is being moved to an easy access account with Aldermore, £1,000 has been moved so far.

12. Communications (MCT)

a. Update

- i. JMH mentioned that MCT and JMH do a lot of work for communications, the content needs to be consistent across all social media sites
KL said that it is important that everything is in place for the European Para Table Tennis Championships.
JMH suggested adding a social media person and potentially a sponsorship person for the next cycle.

Social media followers have increased, we are still the most followed para table tennis NGB in the world.

13. Competitions (JMH)

a. Other Event Plans including fundraising / sponsorship

Unfortunately, the follower numbers are not high enough to gain lucrative sponsorship deals. Corporate responsibility funding is unlikely as companies tend to look at what they can get out of the sponsorship.

b. Competitions (JT)

There will be more tables at the European Para Table Tennis Championships than at the Worlds, each player will have a practice



table.

c. National Championships update

The National Championships went smoothly.

Well done to Carole Miles for the quick turnaround on a fantastic event and great work from all of the volunteers.

Feedback from athletes was good.

We will get quote from several venues for next year.

JMH kindly funded the photographer. MC advised that ideally, we need to find sponsorship for future National Championships as there is a deficit.

Sheffield City Council had paid half the hire fee for the hall.

d. Grand Prix circuit

There will be a tournament on the Sunday after the Euros, there will be no ranking points as international players will be taking part.

14. Honours and Awards (KT)

a. Update

The pre COVID-19 awards were presented at the National Championships. Photos were taken.

We are delighted that Gorazd Vecko received an Honorary MBE. This has gained a lot of media attention. He has even been invited to the King's birthday celebrations by the British Ambassador who also came to the Slovenia Para Open to meet him and cheer on our players.

15. Date of the next meeting (LL)

- a.** LL will circulate a Doodle Poll to find the date of the next meeting once the new chair has been officially appointed. The meeting will ideally be in November 2023. The Performance Director will be invited to this. LL ACTION.