

Board Meeting – November 21st 2022 start 7.30 p.m..

Present - Board: Colin Roper (CR), Martin Hughes (MH), Tom Wilson (TW), Cary Bush (CB), Ray Keemer-Richards (RKR) Ayjay Keemer-Richards (AKR)

Colin welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for giving up their time.

Board Meeting from October 6th 2022. Briefly reviewed, noon had any comments. RKR mentioned that they were not present. Remaining members agreed they were a true and fair view of the meeting and they were adopted and a copy will be passed to Paul Leverett to place on the website.

Annual General Meeting CR stated that the main purpose of tonight's meeting was to discuss 3 proposals to be placed before the members at the AGM

- 1) **Proposal to replace the word charity with company in the Articles.** CB stated that the submission made to the Charity Commissioners by PE had been subsequently closed due to failure by PE to provide them with information they had requested. They confirmed this in November 2022 and that if we want to apply again for Charitable status we would have to submit a new application. Discussed the contents and one paragraph omitted. CB said it was important that we regularize our Articles and that once this has been completed we can relook at the charitable submission although it will be a long winded and time consuming exercise. Amendments were also made to clarify that the two thirds majority required for a special resolution at an AGM would be those members attending plus any properly submitted proxies.

Copy of proposal appended to the Board Minutes.

It was also clarified that a written resolution without being proposed at an AGM would require 50% (ordinary) or 75% (special) of all signed up members.

Proposal to Reduce the number of Directors. CB advised that he had a difference of opinion with the former Company Secretary as to whether they the President was counted in the number of directors if the number was brought down to 12 versus 13.

MH had reviewed the initial proposal and raised the question that should a director retire and come off the board for at least one cycle, could they put themselves forward for election by the members. CB believes that under the current articles the director can put themselves up again as there are no clear rules as to how long a former director has to be off the board prior to re applying. Current articles as written can result in a director having to retire before they have completed their 3 year term based on the rotational policy.

It was pointed out that there are no specific rules for a board appointed director who could continue on the board providing they continue to get re appointed by the board. The Sport England (SE) Code of Governance allows for up to 3 terms before the Director must retire and they cannot reapply for a certain period of time which we believe to be 3 or 4 years.

TW highlighted the fact the SE code of Governance does focus on major diversity (Currently women make up around 35% of our playing members). SE also emphasise the need for Non Executive Directors.

MH agreed with the reduction in the board but feels that the split from 9:6 should be down to 7:5 and not 6:6 the reasoning be that the Articles, although not necessarily in practice is a member lead organisation. MH said that he would be happy to go with 6:6 but be in a position to put forward an amendment at the AGM of 7:5 to allow members to debate the issue. He explained that the articles reflect a member led organisation although this is not always reflected in reality. TW mentioned that during his discussion with members that they felt PE had lost touch with the organisation but did not mention the number of Directors.

The Board voted to put forward the proposal however MH reserved the right to have another member put forward the 7:5 proposal for debate and he would remain silent during the AGM

Additional Class of Membership CB explained that a class of membership could be established by the Board of Directors and did not require approval at an AGM however the level of fee would have to be agreed at the AGM. The proposal that the new level of membership would have restricted rights and the initial period would be limited to people who had never held a PE Licence and the first year would be a trial to measure its success or failure. After 2 years this could be opened up to all members. TW had a concern that we may not see the impact in the first year and we may have to extend the trial for a 2nd year as people got to understand the program. TW provided examples of 2 clubs where non PE membership was around 75% and RKR confirmed this level with a club they were helping in Sussex.

MH asked if we would be being reasonable to our members, would regular members be happy playing in local club tournaments at £31 against new members who were paying £10.

RKR believes that we should be looking at 3 levels of membership which will allow members to move between levels each year depending on the level they wanted to play in during the year.

- a. Licence to play all over the country
- b. Middle level playing in local leagues and regional memberships
- c. Social

MH asked why would people even want to pay £10. RKR / TW mentioned Insurance. MH said that many of the players turn out to play and do not worry about having no insurance cover. He was unaware of any insurance claims since he started playing.

MH felt that if we want to promote something we have to come up with something to attract people. As an organisation we have a weakness that there are not enough benefits to be a member and the sport has a culture of people not wanting to pay - £10 devalues what we do and we need to spend time improving the benefits for example through a 3rd party supplier, we need to focus on improving value. MH also stated that although there was a broad estimate of how many non-PE people there are playing pétanque in England, PE has no way of contacting this 'market' directly with the £10 membership offer. Just identifying a potential market is not enough, the critical thing is how you reach that market and get it to join PE. There is no strategy proposed to do that and no discussion about the marketing spend that might be required.

RKR felt we need to sell them PE through a "taster" let them play in competitions and see if it is for them. MH asked the question – of 2200 members – how many are roll up and play "social" members, he felt this was around 50% of the members, TW and RKR think more. RKR feels there are quite a few benefits which are available but members just don't make use of them.

RKR estimates that there are approximately 30,000 people who play competitively and how many of these would join PR at a lower fee. He is aware of at least 4 leagues who would be interested.

CR aware that there are 2 sides to the argument but what is it that the grass roots are asking for and likes the idea of 3 levels but as an organisation we have continued to undersell ourselves.

TW says that he is embarrassed that as a NGB we only have 2,200 members – how can we expect to attract sponsorship grants without a sizeable membership base. There is no one responsible for marketing on the board and if we can reach a critical mass we will be in a better position to attract funding. Where is the 5 year business plan. We are fiddling around the edges and not doing anything to grow the base. We need to break into the International Market. MH – it easy to talk about it but another thing to execute with lack of resources both finance and volunteers

MH stated that we had won medal in the Europeans TW asked who knows about it MH advised that he spent time over a period of 2 days promoting it through Press release with limited success.

CR – an emotive subject and suggested that we should leave it for the new board to see how we bring it to market and make it attractive to the grass roots. He suggested that we should put it to the membership for a vote. RKR was against restricting it to members who have not held a licence and felt this should be open to members who had previously lapsed. We currently lose around 300 to 500 members a year and this could be a way to entice them back into the fold.

CB / TW /RKR and JKR support the idea of multi tiered membership while MH opposed the idea. He feels that it undervalues the membership and that it will be divisive amongst our membership. RKR mentioned the example of Sky who provide offers to prospective members that are not available to existing members.

- 2) Tribunal Review. CR stated that the release of the report was being held up by one of the TR members and he was hoping that he would receive a written statement for the AGM
- 3) Pakefield – CR advised that we had met with IOW Tours (via zoom) and discussed all the issues raised at the previous board meeting and we would be meeting with them and Pontins in February / March to ensure the issues are being addressed.
- 4) AOB, there was no further items and the meeting was closed just before 9.00 p.m.