

# Pétanque England



## Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2020 by videoconference

### Present:

Clive De Silva (CDS), Ken Buchan (KB), Martin Hughes (MH), Alan Roden (AR), Barry Wing (BG), Ray Keemer-Richards (R K-R), Ajay Keemer-Richards (J K-R), Cary Bush (CB), Jim Marstin (JM), David Baxter (DB), Colin Roper (CR), Christine Spray (CS), Toni Gates (TG)

### In Attendance:

Gareth Sullivan (GS) [Umpires Commission]

#### 1 Apologies for Absence

Bob Parker

#### 2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The previously circulated minutes of the meeting held on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2020 were approved as a true and correct record.

#### 3 Matters Arising

##### 3.1 Expense Claims and Budgetary Control

The draft revised expenses and budgetary control procedures had yet to be finalised and it was agreed that this should be carried forward to the next meeting.

Action CB

##### 3.2. Website

MH had carried out a training session to provide instruction to those members who need access to the website. AR missed the training session and MH agreed to do this with him individually.

Action MH

TG & BP already had access IDs to enable them to update the website. Anyone else requiring an access ID should contact DB

Action DB

MH agreed to circulate the website traffic statistics

Action MH

#### 4 Treasurer's Report

##### 4.1 Current Financials

CB presented the estimated financial forecast for 2020 showing a projected surplus of £11,433, a modest increase over last month's projected surplus of £10,959. Since last month we had received membership renewals totalling £400 and had made subscription

refunds totalling £260, a net increase in membership income of £140. The applications for refunds had been fewer than expected. CB circulated detailed listings of the refunds made and a summary showing that 40% of the refund requests had been made by Chiltern members. Various comments had been made by those members seeking refunds – some considered that a full refund should have been made and others wanted a reduction to be made to the 2021 subscriptions. The last date for submitting Refund applications is 1 August. CB also circulated a schedule showing the financial contributions made by each region's members in 2019 compared with the financial support made by PE to each region's players. Chiltern were by far the largest net beneficiary. CB also highlighted the NYA expenditure of £5,384 on junior development and suggested that Regions could be asked to contribute towards this in respect of any of their juniors attending the coaching sessions.

[Attachments: -](#)

[Financial Forecast for 2020 as at 18 July](#)

[List of Refunds Made](#)

[Analysis of financial support given to each Region's members in 2019](#)

## **5 Survey Results**

MH Reported that there had been 592 responses to the membership survey representing 22.1% of the total 2019 membership. The responses from each gender broadly reflected the gender division within the membership. Statistically this produced a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 3.56%. (Professional pollsters usually aimed to achieve a margin of error of 3%). The age grouping of the respondents was a reasonably representative sample. Interestingly the survey has revealed that 37% of the membership have been members for more than 10 years and 72% have been members for more than 4 years, indicating that we have quite a loyal membership. The analysis of responses by region showed that the GWR was overrepresented, and that Kent was under represented. Responses from other regions broadly reflected their proportionate share of the total membership. The responses to the playing aspirations questions revealed that 40.6% are "social" players, 36.4% were motivated largely by the desire to compete in the Inter Regionals and 20% belonged to the elite playing categories.

### **Membership Subscriptions**

Only 5.6% of members believed that the subscriptions were too high. 41.4% supported a tiered membership model.

### **PE Spending**

Most members believed that too much was spent on international representation and not enough on domestic competitions and development.

### **International Representation**

Only 15% of members felt that no financial support should be given to international teams. 43% supported the most popular option of sharing out an agreed limit of funds equally between the various age/gender categories.

### **Bouledrome**

50% of members gave the top 4 degrees of importance to the establishment of a Bouledrome but most members did not agree that PE funds should be used to any significant degree to achieve that.

### **Grassroots Development**

70% of members felt that clubs were best placed to attract new players and only 7.1% considered that PE nationally were best placed to do this.

### **Umpiring Fees**

21.6% of members agreed with paying umpires a daily fee and just under half the membership agreed with the payment of a fee if PE could afford it. 28.9% were not in favour.

### **Schools Development**

Most members thought that a schools development programme should be organised nationally or by Regions with national funding. 21.3% of members felt that the cost/return of such a programme was too uncertain to justify using limited resources.

### **Love Admin**

65.8% of members felt that the Love Admin system was easy or very easy to use. Surprisingly 17.4% of members had never used the system.

### **Communications with Members**

The most important channels of communication were regarded by members as email and the website.

The following approval ratings were awarded for the activities shown:-

Youth Development (74%)

Coaching (71.9%)

Livestreaming (66.2%)

Website (54.9%)

Eurocup (53.1%)

International Women's Day (52.8%)

MH thought that the website score was rather worrying as this was regarded as one of the main channels of communication.

Action MH

The lack of enthusiasm for the International Women's day was surprising. He agreed to extract the survey responses for each gender.

[Attachment: Survey Summary](#)

## **6 PE and the way Forward**

DB presented a report in which he had identified themes from the narrative responses provided to the survey and possible consequential courses of action for the Board to pursue.

### **Value for Subscription Fee**

Many social members felt that they were not receiving value for their subscription, a sentiment which chimed with those calling for a tiered membership system. The Board should look to create a value proposition for every level of membership it envisages catering for.

### **Sport Development**

The general perception is that we do not promote the sport sufficiently to the general public, schools and the playing community who are non-members.

### **Spend Less on International Teams**

A significant number of respondents felt that less of the cost of financing international teams should be borne by membership subscriptions and more by sponsorship or other fund raising.

### **Bouledrome**

Most members considered the establishment of a bouledrome to be important but only if it was in their own region. It might be more fruitful for PE to assist Regions to establish covered terrains.

### **Domestic Playing**

Events such as the Inter Regionals and the Home Nations were popular with members and there is clearly an appetite among club players for more to be offered at that level.

### **International Playing**

Most responses seemed to indicate that members felt that in common with most amateur sports our international players need to self-fund participation in internationals.

The Suggestions and Ideas included in DB's briefing paper were considered by the Board and the following actions were agreed for inclusion in the draft action plan:-

### **The Board**

It would be for the Board to consider and put forward a Value proposition in conjunction with a tiered membership scheme. The Board would also look at ways in which the sport can be promoted more effectively across clubs, regions and nationally.

### **The Events Group**

The Events Group should be tasked to look through all the suggestions put forward by members and come up with ideas for new activities. It would also be appropriate to look at ways for improving the Euro Cup competition.

### **Sport Development Group**

The Sport Development Group should draw up plans and estimated costings for a school development programme. The Group should also consider putting together a support package for Regional / Club Open days.

### **National Performance Panel**

The NPP should reassess how international playing should be funded in the long term. There is a need for a temporary budget to be agreed for next year. CB will provide CDS with an estimate of how much could be made available for international representation and player development from next year's subscription income based on membership levels of 2,000, by Sunday. This will be fed through to the NPP so that Section Leads can prepare costed proposals for 2021, to be completed within 1 week.

Action CB

Action NPP

### **Alternative Funding**

AR pointed out that DB's draft action plan did not specifically provide for any action on seeking alternative funding from grant giving bodies etc. It was agreed that this action would be included.

### **Coaching**

Despite a substantial improvement in the volume and quality of coaching there had been some survey responses suggesting that there was a lack of coaching in some areas. The Coaching Commission would look at ways and means of ensuring that coaching could be delivered more consistently and visibly across the membership.

Action GS

## **Umpires Commission**

It was agreed that the Coaching Commission will look at the relevant survey feedback and report back to the Board

**Action  
Board**

Board members were asked to supply DB with any suggested additions or changes to the action plan by Wednesday. The action plan would be issued for consideration of the Regional Presidents at the Assembly meeting.

### **Attachment: DB Draft Report and Action Plan**

## **7 Social Media Guidelines**

It was agreed that the draft Social Media Guidelines circulated by KB should be approved and adopted.

### **Attachment – Draft Social Media Guidelines**

**Action KB**

## **8 Any Other Business**

### **8.1 Umpiring**

GS confirmed that the minutes of the last Umpiring Commission had been circulated to all Board members and that this practice would be continued in future. The Umpiring Commission wished to control all the Umpiring Budget included expenses paid to umpires for officiating at events which presently were paid from the Domestic Playing Budget. The Umpiring Commission were also not happy that the PE Rules required the Commission to comprise the Regional Umpires. GS pointed out that none of the Umpiring Executive were Regional Umpires and many Regions did not have a Regional Umpire. The Umpiring Commission did not believe that the PE Rules regarding the Umpiring Commission were fit for purpose. The Umpiring Commission proposed to submit draft new rules for consideration by the Board at its next meeting. GS asked to be supplied with the Playing Calendar at the earliest opportunity so that umpires can be allocated to events.

**Action  
Umpiring  
Commission**

### **8.2 Coaching**

CR had been in touch with MH regarding alterations to the Coaching page on the website.

CR asked if DB could assume the role of DBS verifier for Kent in place of Annette Eggleton. DB would see if he could still log on to the KCC system; if not CR would get it re-set.

**Action DB**

### **8.3 Members' AOB items**

**Sam Blakey – Baldock Town, Chiltern**

**Board's stance on selection for next year's international teams.**

MH confirmed that the selection for the Men's Worlds will be the from the existing squad.

**Neil Stevenson – Chiltern Regional Management Committee  
Subscription Refunds**

DB & CDS had both replied to Neil explaining the reasoning for the refund policy. KB to respond further.

Action KB

**Andy Rose – Kernow Management Committee  
Graeme Kirkham – Tregony PC – Kernow  
Mercia Regional Management Committee  
Venue for the Inter Regional Championships 2021**

The above members have complained about the location of the venue for the Inter Regionals but there is little or no choice about location from the limited venue options available that have the necessary facilities and commercial viability.

Action KB

**Bill Wood - President Heart of England Region  
Fund Raising Suggestion – 200 Club**

The Treasurer will investigate the practicalities and need for registration to operate a 200 club.

Action CB

**Bill Wood – President Heart of England Region  
Suggestion about Reduced Safety Lanes**

Bill had suggested leaving a 1 metre wide lane between pistes to maintain social distancing rather than a spare lane. It was agreed that this would be too confusing & impractical. We need an intervening gap of at least 2 metres to comply with guidelines.

Action KB

**Marion Sweet – Royal Wootton Bassett – PC Gt Western  
Conflict of Interest Declarations**

It was agreed that Directors should be routinely asked at the beginning of Board Meetings to declare any pecuniary or business interests in any of the agenda items.

Action KB

**Adrian Cowie – London Petanque Club  
Proposal that all Club Committee members be PE Members.**

This used to be a requirement but was reduced to 6 members because clubs were disaffiliating rather than comply. It was agreed that more should be done to explain to non-PE committee members that they have no insurance protection in the event that they become vicariously liable for loss or injury caused by club members.

Action KB

**Peter Hardy – Bob Carter Centre PC – Anglia Region  
Need to Keep Umpiring Moving**

Umpiring developments dealt with at item 6 \* 8.1 above.

**Oliver Grau – London PC**  
**Need for a Bouledrome in London**  
See Bouledrome item at 6 above

**Attachment – Copy of Members’ AOB items.**

#### **8.4 Monetizing the Website**

BW suggested that we should look at ways of “monetising” the website. MH pointed out that this might involve a significant change to the look of the website as commercial partners will want their ads to be prominently displayed on the front page. We had a substantial number of visitors to the site but normally commercial deals would involve discounted sales to members. CDS suggested that we could consider inserting click links to the email shots we issue.

#### **8.5 Celebrity Endorsements**

BW had been trying to contact various celebrities he knew had some involvement in pétanque. He had also contacted the Ant & Dec show to see if they were interested in using pétanque on the show.

#### **8.6 Umpiring**

BW felt that the lack of umpires was dire and that the Board should step in to improve matters. GS thought that there may have been a lack of respect for the Umpiring Commission by the Board and vice versa but he wanted to draw a line against that and continue in as constructive way.

#### **8.7 Membership Recruitment Incentive Scheme**

BW suggested that PE should give incentives for members to recruit other members. He would put together a proposal and submit to the Board

**Action BW**

#### **8.8 Repeat Surveys**

BW suggested that PE should organise more membership surveys. There were questions he would have liked to include in the last survey. MH thought that there could be survey fatigue if there were too many. TG thought that they would lose their novelty value and become ineffective and suggested that it would be useful to have a biannual survey to check on progress.

#### **8.9 Inter Regionals**

BW had been asked why Wales was not asked for a contribution towards the running costs of the Inter Regionals. DB pointed out that no team was required to pay to participate in the inter regionals and it would be insulting to ask Wales to do so.

### **8.10 Travelling to the Inter Regionals**

BW had been asked by Devon Region if financial assistance could be given to Devon members attending the Inter Regionals in 2021. It was pointed out that for many years Devon members had been in relatively close proximity to the Inter Regionals firstly at Brean Sands and then at Hayling Island. During that time members in more distant regions had not asked for help with travelling costs.

### **8.11 Viability of Regions**

RK-R pointed out that Kernow had no registered clubs and only 10 PE individual members. Isle of Wight had just the 1 club and 33 individual members. He questioned whether regions were viable with such small numbers.

### **8.12 Insurance**

RK-R had been reminded recently by our Insurance Broker contact that PE members playing against Non-PE members were not covered against any loss or injury caused by the PE Non-Member. CB was in ongoing discussions with the Insurers as to how this can be dealt with.

Action nCB

### **8.13 Covid Guidelines**

CDS had received confirmation from Sport England that we would be allowed to organise events of up to 30 participants (including officials and spectators). CDS would revise the existing guidelines accordingly. RK-R suggested that the guidance should advise participants to carry their own sanitising materials in case the venue facilities were closed. CDS pointed out that it was a requirement that the venue should have adequate washing facilities. Each club was required to complete a Covid risk assessment and he queried whether these should be submitted to PE for verification. It was agreed that this would be impracticable, but it would be a good idea to attach a specimen risk assessment to the guidance.

Action CDS

The wisdom of planning national competitions later in the year was questioned but it was agreed that these would remain as possibilities until and unless government guidance indicated otherwise.

The propriety of holding an event at 2 different venues was considered but it was felt that there too many ambiguities about it for the practice to be acceptable within the guidelines

### **8.14 Petanque Charitable Trust**

Nick Goodheart had suggested that PE should take over the administration of the Charitable Trust he had formed, including responsibility for the appointment of new charity trustees as and when required.

It was noted that it would not be long before PE was able to apply for charitable status and that it might then wish to promote its own “legacy pack” leading to a duplication of effort. It was therefore agreed that the matter should be left in abeyance until the position about the company’s charitable status had been settled.

**15 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will take place by way of video conference on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2020 at 10.00 a.m.

**Action  
Board**