



2017 AGM Minutes

2017 Annual General Meeting of the England Touch Association

Venue: Hough End Centre, Mauldeth Road West, Manchester, M21 7SX

Date: 10:00 Sunday 26th February 2017

Order of Business:

1 Opening Address and Welcome

Chris Martin (CM) England Touch Non-Executive Director and meeting Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Start at 10AM.

2 Apologies

Apologies received from the following:

2.1 Committee and post holders:

Doug Benzie (Finance Director)

2.2 Members:

Club - Cambridge	Club - Oxford	League - Bristol Touch League
Club - Canterbury	Club - Peterborough	League - Cambridge Touch
Club - Catterick	Club - Rugby Barbearians	League - Canterbury Touch
Club - Crewe and Nantwich	Club - Tumeke	League - CSSC Monday League
Club - CSSC	Club - University - Exeter	League - In2Touch TV - Maidenhead
Club - Galaxy London	Club - University - Oxford	League - In2Touch TV - Oxford
Club - Nomads	Club - Wixams	League - In2Touch TV - Reading
Club - Northampton COYS	Club - Yorkshire Thorns	League - Medway
Club - Norwich Rebels	League - Bath Touch	
Club - Nottingham	League - Bedford	

3 Registration and accreditation of nominated delegates

3.1 Committee and post holders

Name	Representing	Votes
Nicolas Van de Rijt	ETA Committee - Referee Manager	1
Cari Thorpe	ETA Committee - Head of Medical Services	1
Carly Heselwood	ETA Committee - Governance Director	1
Chris Wearmouth	ETA Committee - PR & Marketing Manager	1
Gregg Cropper	ETA Committee - CEO	1
Ken Pollard	ETA Committee - Development Manager Proxy: Club - Nottingham	2

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Rich King	ETA Committee - Membership and Affiliation Manager, Proxy: Club - CSSC, Club - Oxford, League - CSSC Monday League	4
Tim Osborne	ETA Committee - High Performance Director	1
Chris Martin (Chair)	Proxy: Club - Cambridge, Club - Canterbury, Club - Crewe and Nantwich, Club - Galaxy London, Club - Nomads, Club - Northampton COYS, Club - Norwich Rebels, Club - Peterborough, Club - Rugby Barbearians, Club - Tumeke, Club - University - Exeter, Club - University - Oxford, Club - Yorkshire Thorns, League - Bedford, League - Cambridge Touch, League - Canterbury Touch, League - Medway	17

3.2 Members and other attendees

Name	Representing	Votes
Tim Oliver	Club - Lincoln	1
Jennifer Jones	Club - Manchester Chargers	1
Gary Povall	Club - Orrell RUFC	1
Julia Cole	Club - Thames Valley Vikings	1
Michael Abromowitz	League - In2Touch - Clapham Common, League - In2Touch - Hyde Park, League - In2Touch - Manchester Burnage, League - In2Touch - Regents Park, League - In2Touch - Richmond, League - In2Touch - St Albans, League - In2Touch - Wandsworth Common, Proxy: League - Bath Touch, League - Bristol Touch League, League - In2Touch TV - Maidenhead, League - In2Touch TV - Oxford, League - In2Touch TV - Reading	12
Gareth McRae	League - In2Touch - Putney / Wandsworth	1
Tracy Andrew	League - In2Touch - Surrey Quays	1
Adam Brimelow	League - Manchester - Altrincham Kersal	1
Chris Simon	League - Perfect Motion - Nottingham	1

3.3 Attendees (No vote)

ETA - DBS Manager and interim secretary Julia Kang

ETA - Incoming Secretary Emma Lonsdale

ETA - NED Natalie Davis

ETA - Events Director (outgoing) Kevin Hill

Observer - Mark James (NED applicant)

Meeting was deemed quorate as > 10 members present in person who are eligible to vote.

4 Receive and consider the minutes of the previous AGM

Minor amendments to acknowledge: Ahead of the meeting, 1 change made to page 9. Revised minutes accepted by membership.

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5 Directors Reports: Verbal summary

The following board members gave verbal summaries of their areas of responsibility:

5.1 CEO, Gregg Cropper (GC)

Annual Report: GC gave a brief summary of the Annual Report. Governance is growing with the formal set up of strategic planning in the hope to formalise our strategic planning framework. Two NEDs have been appointed to drive this forward, a third NED is likely to be appointed with a Sports Law background in order to assist with targets.

The board has worked diligently to provide strong leadership for the association. We held 2 board meetings and our annual ACE weekend in the past 12 months, during which, we **Assessed** what we'd done, **Created** plans for the future and will be **Executing** them over the 2017 season and beyond.

The future we seek to create is based on 4 pillars.

- To lead the development of Touch, to become England's leading recreational activity
- To expand and diversify our product range, and improve and add to our services to enhance our reach.
- Have the ability to provide opportunities for everyone to participate in a way that suits them, on a regular basis in a high quality and friendly environment.
- To facilitate and govern the expansion of Touch to every corner of the country, and become widely recognised as the sports governing body.

Short & Long term goals: Discussion centred on short and long term goals including consultation around vision, values and mission. Long term aim to ensure a sporting legacy following the 2018 Euros and planning is already underway to ensure this ambition is achieved.

National Squads: We have had some great performances by all our teams at the 2016 European Championships, where we won 6 of the 9 categories, taking 2nd place in the other 3. Our Junior Squads spread to 4 teams, each team coming away with a medal in their category. We look to build on this again in the future.

Events: Aim to internally host all major events in 2017 – NTS, CTS, DTS, MWTC, Nationals (and UTS in 2017/18 academic year). Great to have been given the rights to host the ETC18, which is a great honour and will be a big job for the whole association, but one we look forward to.

New website: Still work to be done but have added an online shop. The social media team are working to add videos and online resources to increase visibility and awareness. More online shop improvements will also be implemented, with better systems.

Nationals: Successful partnership brokered with Ryvita who were our headline sponsors.

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Thanks: Within this period there has been immeasurable hours put in by numerous volunteers on the committee and we say thanks and farewell to a number of our directors.

5.2 Governance Director, Carly Heselwood (CH)

Voluntary code of conduct: Responses collated from committee member views towards practical considerations, which will contribute to our organisation's future strategic development. The Sport and Recreation Alliance's 'Voluntary Code of Good Governance' is currently under review following the recent launch of Sport England's 'A Code for Sports Governance', however each will provide good practice and standards for England Touch to adhere to and work towards.

Fully compliant with Companies House All directors now have formally registered appointments and terminations.

Policies and Procedures: All relevant documents now available on the website. Regular reviews continue to ensure policies and procedures are updated. Nominations Committee terms of reference developed for future board recruitment including representation from the Sport and Recreation Alliance. Culture book for new appointments is being developed to help integration into the organisation's growing workforce.

Safeguarding: In light of recent media coverage and Sport Duty of Care review, looking to provide club templates ensuring consistency of application across our club network.

Articles of Association: A huge thanks to Natalie Davis and Richard King for their contributions and support working with Onside Law.

Moving on: CH stated her intention to move on, saying: "I am most grateful for the opportunity presented to me five years ago and I offer my best wishes for the continued success of England Touch, the growth and development of the board and of course the organisations progress towards ongoing improvements within sports governance."

5.3 High Performance Director, Tim Osborne (TO)

Our people in numbers...

- ETC campaign staff = 51
- JTC campaign staff = 16
- HP team= 5
- Total staff = 72 (all with updated Task Descriptions)

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Focus area: Developing our people

- Coaching courses. Head coaches – 12/13 now with FIT Advanced Coaching Course qualified
- Staff development
 - Leaders Performance membership – summits and content distributed to HP team
 - Peter Bell visit (confirmed again for 2017)
 - HPD to self-directed trip NTLs to work as Assistant Coach in Elite 8s (three England coaches attending in 2017)
- Medical, sports science and S&C initiatives
 - Injury incidence study by Emma Cropper
 - FMS study by Cari Thorpe
 - GPS and tournament monitoring study by Nick Dobbin, et.al.
 - Nutritional and tournament load study by Nicola Marsh

Our athletes

- ETC players. Squad exposure = 281 ; England representatives = 144
- JTC players. Squad exposure = 88 ; England representatives =60
- Total players in programme. Squad exposure = 361; England representatives =204

What was new...

- HPD not a full-time coach
- Using Hudl, with two additional Performance Analysts
- Mixed 15s division and Men's 45s division
- Review, Plan, Develop process now in place at end of season for national coaches (8/13 RPDs submitted)

2016 goals

- Senior teams
 - Win the overall title at the ETC16 - ACHIEVED
 - Win all Opens categories at ETC16 (win Opens Divisional Title) - PART ACHIEVED (Mixed Open came 2nd)
 - Win all Seniors/Masters categories at ETC16 (win Seniors/Masters Divisional Title) - PART ACHIEVED (Men's 35s and 40s came 2nd)
- Junior teams – no goals...this needs to be rectified

Departing comments

- TO stated he is not seeking reappointment after 3.5 years to focus on career.
- HP programme is in much stronger position than when he took on the role in 2013 and now is a good time with strong, established, coaching cohort for someone new to come in and work to TWC19.
- TO will remain involved in coaching players and coaches.

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- TO thanked the Medical, S&C and SS team, particularly Cari Thorpe, Emma Cropper and Nick Dobbin for their professional approach to caring for and preparing our national athletes, as well as their motivation to better understand the demands of Touch through research.
- TO thanked all the coaches he has worked with over the past three and half years, but notably to his fellow Opens coaches – Ben Smith, Noel Forde, Justin Conway and Simon Clare, for their commitment, support, advice and critical insights.
- Likewise he thanked to Sammie Phillips and Tom Devereux for their strategic support and counsel.
- TO thanked back-office HP team – Zoe Parish, Lois Lau, Cathryn Ogle and Denise Yarrow – who have “kept me sane and ensured the tedious matters are attended to”.
- Finally, TO thanked the Board and Executive for their support, and especially to Gregg for his seemingly endless supply of energy to drive the growth and development of Touch in England.

Final thoughts

- TO set out his final thoughts on England Touch:
- Continue to grow the game, but don’t do so at the expense of quality or professionalism.
- Strive for an inclusive culture and safe environment for all types of individuals – players, coaches, referees, staff – to play a part in the game we love.
- Focus on our juniors and getting females involved, esp. through more Girls and Women’s playing opportunities.

5.4 Events Director, Kevin Hill (KH)

Tournament level of performance has increased dramatically over the past year. Tournament delivery has also improved.

- DTS huge step up in terms of playing level
- CTS will expand to 16 teams
- NTS remained at 16
- 5 clubs promoted to CTS, 1 dropped down

KH thanked the local clubs for supporting the ETA with running events / tournaments. Nationals tournament was a success in addition to referee branding. All of this helped us to submit a successful euros bid.

KH will support in the interim until his position is filled.

5.5 NEDs Report

9 Months ago the NEDs were brought on board and this is the first time the ETA has had NEDs. There are two main aspects to the role of the NEDs.

Firstly, CM and ND will be looking to develop the strategic plan, look at the organisation and think about ways to move forward. Four strategic areas that need attention from NEDs:

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- **Volunteers:** As agenda item 8 demonstrates, the organisation is losing lots of key staff. Volunteering takes up a lot of time and there is work to do to ensure England Touch can recruit and retain volunteers. Ideally this year the organisation needs to start moving towards some paid roles.
- **Financial sustainability:** The Board needs to ensure the organisation is financially sustainable and explore various revenue streams, including new Sport England funding and sponsorship. This is crucial for moving towards paid roles.
- **Governance:** New Articles of Association will (hopefully) be in place after the AGM. This gives the organisation a robust governance structure that will provide a foundation going forwards. It will also help in terms of attracting funding, sponsors and staff.
- **Delivery:** Ensure the organisation continues to provide opportunities for people to play touch at every level, and that touch continues to be a welcoming, inclusive and fun sport for everyone to be involved in.

Secondly, the NEDs also provide a scrutiny function to the Executive Board, ensuring we are meeting our objectives as an organisation.

6 Financial Report

Gregg Cropper (in the absence of Doug Benzie)

Reporting period 9 months cycle ending 30th September 2016.

High Performance: HP money was post-financial data and another 25k sent out post reporting period - this will be reported next year in the financial figures as wasn't included in this cycle. HP player/pay system likely to continue with no immediate plans to change. In the long term, looking to possibly support with sponsorship and partners

Events: Aim to run more through ETA in order to increase revenue from this area. Membership is still one of our biggest income streams.

Online shop: Has been expanded in order to offer additional revenue potential.

Sponsorship: Hope to get cash sponsors to off-set against kit and an additional sponsor for headline NTS event.

- Aim is to keep financially liquid and 15 budgets have now been condensed to 3 in order to simplify things:
 - HP
 - Events
 - Executive

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Risk: Board members have met with 2 accountancy forms to discuss TAX including...

- VAT
- Corporation

7 Receive and Consider Annual Report

No comments were received from the room on the Annual report draft.

8 Election for elected directors

No candidates were nominated in advance.

- Chief Executive Officer - Gregg Cropper
- Finance Director - Vacant
- HP Director - Vacant
- Governance Director - Vacant
- Development Director - Chris Simon (proposed by Ken Pollard and seconded by Mike Abromowitz at the meeting)

Chris Simon was voted in as Development Director by members. Once the new Articles of Association are in place, and a process is in place to fill casual vacancies, CS said he may step down at that point but was keen to be in post until the vacancy was filled.

Chris Wearmouth has listed all open positions on UK Sport websites including role descriptions but may need to re-position these opportunities as many of them are too big for voluntary roles. As an association, the ETA hopes to continue to push forward and drive towards finding quality people to fill important roles within the organisation.

9 To consider any proposed changes to the Association structure

Summary of key changes of constitution

Following advice from the Sport and Recreation Alliance we have drafted new, more comprehensive, Articles of Association (AoA) that we propose replaces the current constitution document.

- The current constitution was deemed not fit for purpose. A more robust governance document was needed. The aim is to future proof it to allow flexibility in the organisation but also continued growth.
- The Sport England strategy has a 3 tiered governance code, but tier 3 applies only to funded organisations. This is what ETA should be aiming for though.
- Sport and Recreation Alliance Voluntary Code – ND sits on the working group to develop the revised code.
- The SE and SRA Codes are clear that the Board needs some decision making functions. This is balanced in the new Articles of Association by voting power of Board members lying with members.

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The Sport and Recreation Alliance advises that members should have some say in the appointment of particular roles. The Articles of Association are drafted so that the roles that have most direct contact with members, for example the High Performance Director and Development Director, would be elected. However, the Board recognises that highly specialised roles such as the Finance Director and Governance Director may need to remain appointed roles. The ETA would like to ensure the right set of skills on the board including experience from outside the Touch community.

The ETA Nominations Committee will nominate candidates for election and appointment as set out in the new Articles of Association.

(GC) from the 96 votes available, a maximum 12 come from the board. Each affiliated club gets a right to vote. As the number of clubs grows, membership voting power will effectively increase.

Results of AoA vote:

For	43
Abstain	3
Against	3

AoA were therefore passed.

10 Update on ETA structure map

Large piece of work done on a more detailed organogram.

The role of Director of Development has been split into 2 strands:

- Development pathways (Tom Devereux)
- Admin/Coaching Courses (Position remains vacant however Ken Pollard is happy to help out in the interim)

The overall structure of the ETA requires tweaks to ensure greater alignment across regions, especially with regards to referees, development officers and press officers. The hope is to have more coverage of clubs within a specific area and for clusters of clubs to organize this locally.

Additions to be added to the coaching area:

- Keith Dunleavy M45
- Lee Thompson X15

11 To consider any proposed changes to relevant policy documents

For greater transparency on relevant policies, all general public policies are now on the ETA website.

The ETA keep an internal log and review of relevant policy changes.

12 Closure of meeting