

LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION LIMITED (“LTA”) COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 27 May 2021 at 11.30 am
via Zoom Webinar

Present

David Rawlinson (President).

Councillors

Ian Alexander, Rachel Baillache, Bridie Amos, Stephen Baddeley, Liz Bissett, Richard Blackburn, Heather Bottomley, Andy Bradley, Francis Caldwell, Roy Colabawalla, John Copsey, Martin Corrie (Past President), Venetia Cottman, Lesley Cundy, Richard Cutler, Lord Davies of Abersoch (Chairman, LTA Board), Jonathon Dawes, Rick Denton, Andy Fay, Peter Grimsdale, James Grindell, Ian Haigs, Wasim Haq, Craig Haworth, Barry Horne, Louise Hutchinson, Nigel Jordan, Karen Keohane, James Keothavong, Robert Kerr, Claire Kinloch Anderson, Ben Knapp, Steven Law, Judith Loffhagen, Chris Mansour, Jo Marks, Steven Matthews, Adrian Packer, Shiv Paul, Malcolm Peters, Mike Piper, Sandi Procter, Joy Robinson, Martyn Rock, Mark Sanders, Annie Smith, Richard Stoakes, Liz Sweeting, Sir David Tanner, Alison Taylor, Steph Trill, Adrian Waite, Brian Walton, Viv Wilson, Christine Windmill and Steve Winyard.

Alternate for Councillors

Tom Kinloch (representing Northumberland).

In attendance

Michael Bourne (Performance Director), Keith Carder (Head of Competition), David Humphrey (Head of Safeguarding), Abbie Lench (Head of Clubs, Parks, Counties and Volunteering), Chris Pollard (Digital & Events Director), Simon Steele (Finance Director), Roy Staniland (Chair, Tennis Development Committee), Sheila Wall (PA to the President), Vicky Williams (People Director) and Pamela Woodman (Head of Legal).

Minutes

1. **Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

David Rawlinson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Lottie Birdsall Strong, Simon Clarke, Jane Grey and David Vinal.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors were asked to declare an interest as appropriate when a relevant item was discussed.

3. **Minutes of Meetings held on Wednesday 3 March 2021 and on Monday 17 May 2021**

The minutes of the meetings held on Wednesday 3 March 2021 and on Monday 17 May 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising not covered on the agenda.

5. President's Report

The President's Report included in the Council papers was taken as read.

He confirmed that, by close of play the following day (Friday 28 May 2021), the County Wimbledon Ticket documents for 2022 (including partnership paperwork) will be available within the County Resource Guide.

He reminded Councillors to submit an expression of interest in attending the Davis Cup Finals in November by the deadline of 30 June 2021.

6. LTA Chairman's Report

The Chairman's report included in the Council papers was taken as read.

7. LTA Chief Executive's Update

The Chief Executive's business update (together with the latest Business Dashboard) included in the Council papers was taken as read.

8. Tennis Development Committee ("TDC") Update

The comprehensive update on the activities of the TDC and its workstreams included in the Council papers was noted.

Roy Staniland thanked all volunteers and the LTA's Executive team for their support of, and contribution to, the workstreams. He provided an update on the Coach Engagement workstream, covering the coach network events (of which one had now taken place in each County), LTA Youth CPD training sessions (720 virtual sessions held to date against a target of 1,650) and the key priority of increasing the number of females taking the L1 coaching qualification.

Abbie Lench provided an update on the Volunteer Engagement workstream covering National Volunteers week (1-7 June 2021), the virtual LTA National Awards ceremony (to be shown on the LTA YouTube channel at 8 pm on Thursday 24 June 2021) and the Venue Volunteer Facebook group launch on 21 June 2021. She encouraged Counties to support and promote each of these events. She also provided an example of a County Dashboard, the template for which is available on the County Communications Hub.

9. Council Updates

9.1 Participation

Keith Carder provided an overview on participation trends. He said that yearly participation trends showed an 8% year on year growth in 2020, with tennis capitalising on the opportunity the pandemic presented, although the impact of the lockdowns can now be seen. He noted that, if you discount the Covid-hit months over the past year, the underlying participation trends for yearly and monthly play are positive, following on from the positive trend seen in 2019, but it is now vital to make up for time lost during the periods of no activity. The kids' participation trend, which was impacted in 2020, has showed a positive bounce back so far in 2021.

He said that tennis fared well in relation to other sports within the recently published Sport England Active Lives survey (covering 16+ year-olds for the period November 2019 to November 2020) and is now the third ranked 'traditional sport' behind football and golf. Tennis was previously fifth and has now overtaken badminton and boxing.

Keith confirmed that the Parks strategy is a key project this year with players playing in parks regularly throughout the year, not just over the Wimbledon period, and with our plans accelerating to support Local Authorities in ensuring the long-term sustainability of their park courts and working with them to invest in booking and access technology to help drive participation growth.

He then referred to Competition restarting post lockdown, which is in full flow with team competitions, the LTA National League and County Cup events. Junior International Tournaments also restarted at Stirling last week and Wrexham this week. The 18U and 16U Junior Nationals are taking place at Surbiton over the next two weeks with Wimbledon wild cards at stake. Local Tennis Leagues (ie adult singles box leagues, mainly in parks) achieved record-breaking numbers in round 1 when tennis was able to restart from April.

Finally, he provided an update on the ITF World Tennis Number ("WTN"), highlighting that the testing results via a panel of experts have been positive with the plan to launch this summer after the grass court season.

In answer to questions from Councillors, Keith Carder said that:

- the participation figures provided include Scotland and Wales other than those within the Sport England Active Lives survey;
- padel will not be included in the WTN launch in July;
- tracking ethnicity within participation trends is part of the work we have set out in the Inclusion Strategy; and
- participation data is now available at a regional level and is tracked through the new County dashboards.

David Humphrey (Head of Safeguarding) gave an update on the new three-year Safeguarding strategy to be launched over the weekend of 29-30 May 2021. The strategy's mission is to develop and implement the highest safeguarding standards across tennis, through the following six strategic pillars with associated SMART objectives under each: Training & Development, Awareness & Engagement, Safeguarding Standards, Case Management, Competitions and Governance. Focus this year will be on ensuring all L2-5 coaches are accredited and on conducting a review of the LTA's performance venue audit process.

He also referred to the relaunch of the Safe to Play Campaign and asked Councillors for their help in ensuring the campaign was promoted by venues in order that volunteers, parents, players and coaches are aware of the signs of potential abuse, how to report a concern and how to keep themselves and children safe in our sport. Pocket-sized information cards had been provided to all venues to distribute and further supplies are available from the Safeguarding team on request.

9.2 **Performance**

Michael Bourne congratulated the Billie Jean King Cup team for winning their April tie against Mexico 3-1. The team is now preparing for the Finals qualifier in early 2022. He said that the Performance team is focussing on two priority areas of development across the Player Pathway, being the delivery of the "brilliant basics" of training and competition experiences and coaching with excellence, and providing value through world-leading Performance support. The Performance competition calendar project is ongoing in order to deliver an

improved competition calendar for 2022 and beyond which will assist in the delivery of the Player Pathway. In addition, a refreshed approach to supporting the 10U Player Pathway is being finalised and will be communicated to County Performance Leads in June. Michael said that the NTC is operating enhanced access and support protocols for the grass court season to support those players who are engaged in junior, senior and wheelchair grass court tournaments. Finally, he reported that other opportunities to enhance players' grass court development/performance are being implemented through wild cards and Performance Support.

9.3 **Technology Update – Digital Transformation Programme**

Chris Pollard provided an overview of the LTA Digital Transformation Programme covering a progress update on key recent digital projects, the future LTA digital roadmap and the planned next steps in relation to the LTA's partnership with ClubSpark.

10. **Grass Court Events 2021**

Chris Pollard provided an update on the LTA's grass court Major Events. This included an overview of the differences this year in the player and spectator experience caused by Covid, an overview of spectator capacities and the expected timeline for finding out more about opportunities to increase venue capacities, both for LTA events and The Championships.

11. **Any Other Business**

11.1 **Actions Arising from the Meeting**

David Rawlinson read out a list of actions which had arisen during the meeting and confirmed that a summary of the actions and key takeaway points will be circulated to Council shortly, the contents of which may be shared with respective management committees.

11.2 **2021 AGM Presentations**

Mike Piper asked that a copy of the 2021 AGM presentation made by Simon Steele and a copy of the President's address be circulated to Councillors. David Rawlinson agreed to follow up on this request.

11.3 **2021 Council Badges**

David Rawlinson said that the 2021 Council badges will be posted the following week as they will be required by those Councillors attending The Championships in order to access certain restricted areas.

12. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next Council meeting will take place on Wednesday 13 October at 10.30 am.

There being no further business, David Rawlinson thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 1.05 pm.

A workshop session took place from 2 pm on the County Governance Reform Project facilitated by Counsel Ltd, the TDC workstream and LTA colleagues. The session provided another opportunity for County and Island Associations to discuss areas they deem a priority in relation to the governance framework and funding model.