

LAWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION LIMITED (“LTA”) COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 3 March 2021 at 10.30am via Zoom Webinar

Present

David Rawlinson (President).

Councillors

Ian Alexander, Rachel Baillache, Bridie Amos, Stephen Baddeley, Jamie Baker, Sara Bennison, Lottie Birdsall Strong, Liz Bissett, Richard Blackburn, Heather Bottomley, Andy Bradley, Francis Caldwell, Naomi Cavaday, Simon Clarke, Yasmin Clarke, 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, Jane Grey, Peter Grimsdale, James Grindell, Ian Haigs, Wasim Haq, Craig Haworth, Clare Hollingsworth, 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, David Vinall, Adrian Waite, Brian Walton, Viv Wilson, Christine Windmill and Steve Winyard.

In attendance

Michael Bourne (Performance Director), Brett Davies (Head of Resourcing, Development & Talent), Lesley Cunningham (Learning & Development Partner), Blane Dodds (Observer, Tennis Scotland), Scott Lloyd (LTA Chief Executive), Rob Mackmurdie (Head of Technology), Chris Pollard (Digital & Events Director), Olly Scadgell (Participation 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, particularly the eleven new Councillors for 2021.

There were no apologies for absence.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

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

3. **Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 9 December 2020**

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9 December 2020 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.

David Rawlinson advised that he and Naomi Cavaday will work with a small group of Colleagues on implementing a programme to better engage with Colour Holders as a key stakeholder group for tennis in Britain and he will report on progress later in the year.

In regard to Wimbledon Ticket Reform, David Rawlinson thanked Councillors for their support throughout the consultation process, the feedback from which has helped to evolve the proposals to achieve the right approach. He asked that partner ticket requests be submitted to Ali Ensor by 30 April 2021 but these will, of course, be subject to availability. He added that in due course Counties will receive a sample partner agreement template, easy to use guidelines and access to webinars in respect of the process for the 2022 Championships. He suggested that Councillors e-mail him offline with any queries or concerns.

David Rawlinson thanked Lesley Cundy for her hard work in arranging a successful new Councillor induction the previous afternoon. He then invited each of the new Councillors to say a few words: Bridie Amos (Hertfordshire), Lottie Birdsall Strong (Board Nominated Councillor – "BNC"), Heather Bottomley (Norfolk), Yasmin Clarke (BNC), Jonathon Dawes (BNC), Peter Grimsdale (ABTO), Wasim Haq (BNC), Ben Knapp (Gloucestershire), Judith Loffhagen (BNC), Adrian Packer (BNC) and Shiv Paul (BNC).

6. LTA Chairman's Report

The Chairman's report included in the Council papers was taken as read. Lord Davies echoed David Rawlinson's welcome to the new Councillors. He thanked volunteers for their continued commitment to the sport. He thanked Scott Lloyd and the Exec team for the sterling job they had done of leading tennis through the challenges of the pandemic. Lord Davies suggested that the pandemic will lead to a digital revolution and that it has highlighted the health and wellbeing agenda. It has also provided an opportunity for tennis to drive participation forward post lockdown. He also referenced the importance of diversity and inclusion in everything the LTA does and how vital it is to invest in and protect tennis facilities.

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.

Scott Lloyd thanked Councillors for their support over the last 12 months. He said he had presented to a Government and Sport England panel on Monday (1 March 2021) in respect of a Government survival support package for sport. The following day he had presented to the Secretaries of State for Education and for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport in relation to getting tennis back into schools post the pandemic. The imminent launch of LTA Youth will mean the LTA is extremely well positioned to support the Government in getting children active again.

Scott Lloyd reported that, since the December Council meeting, the LTA has secured a four-year agreement with cinch as the title partner of the pre-Wimbledon event at The Queen's Club. As a "disruptive" brand, cinch is synonymous with what the LTA is trying to do in opening up tennis.

He said that engaging with volunteers is vital and the January results from the Volunteer Engagement Survey indicate that volunteer engagement overall is up to 72% (from 61% last year). The Club Health Survey showed an increase since last January from 71% to 75% despite the challenges created by the pandemic. Satisfaction rates in terms of support from the LTA are up to 82% (from 57% last year) reflecting that the work that the LTA is doing to support its venues is recognised.

He said the LTA is prioritising facility investment considerations in respect of the support and resources required for protecting the network of community indoor tennis centres (“CITCs”).

Finally, he referred to the ITF wheelchair event to be held at Loughborough later this month and GB’s Billie-Jean King Cup tie against Mexico to be held at the NTC on 16 and 17 April 2021. Although both events will be held behind closed doors, it will be good to see our elite players back on court.

A number of points/questions were raised covering: the thinking around the LTA being a disruptor and changing the perception of tennis at all levels across the country; the tracking at Exec level of granular insight into participation trends across all segments of tennis to ensure resources are targeted appropriately (and a request for some of this insight to be shared with Council was noted); and the continued support being given to secure the future of Nottingham Tennis Centre.

8. Tennis Development Committee (“TDC”) Update

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

Roy Staniland provided further context on the work stream objectives. He advised that Julie Piper will be in touch with Counties shortly in respect of the plans for the Junior County Cups which it is hoped will take place, in line with Government guidance.

9. Council Updates

9.1 Participation

Olly Scadgell provided an overview on the various frequencies of participation which show an increase year on year in all but monthly participation and with once a year participation growing by 8% in 2020. He also covered the key objectives of the Venue Registration proposition; the number of registered venues grew last year from 2,686 to 4,268 and the number of declared adult and junior members grew from 616,152 to 707,931. The post-completion review of this project is nearly complete, as a result of which greater flexibility in payment options is being considered.

He said that 58 club forums were delivered in Q4 of 2020 reaching over 2,000 participants with excellent feedback. A request to provide Council with details on the Counties and clubs which had attended the webinars to date was noted. He referred to the pre-read provided in the Council pack on the ITF World Tennis Number which is one of a number of improvements made to competitions through the Competition Strategy and which will have an impact on growing the number of people who play competitively at all levels of the game.

Finally, he advised that, following feedback from County associations, County dashboards will be introduced this year which will report three times a year in April, August and December across key metrics that are aligned to the regional team and LTA business dashboards.

A number of points/questions were raised covering: the opportunity to support the Government in keeping children active during the summer holidays through a tennis offer for schoolchildren both inside and outside the school environment, including LTA Youth whose key focus is primary schools; how LTA Youth is relevant to diverse groups of children (including a suggestion from Jonathon Dawes to link in with the Social Mobility Pledge to ensure it reaches areas of deprivation); the importance of doubles/mixed doubles when encouraging more team competition in the younger age groups and at the recreational end of the competitive pathway; and the forthcoming introduction of a Rally app as part of the digital transformation.

9.2 **Performance**

Michael Bourne provided an update on the Performance Strategy, detailing his early observations and outlining the areas of focus in 2021. He said it is important that the 10 year Performance Strategy continues with a level of consistency and stability. Three years into the strategy is a natural point to review its operational delivery to ensure that the LTA is delivering it in the most impactful way. A current priority is ensuring that all parties involved in the strategy delivery across British tennis share a clear understanding of, and are delivering to, British player development standards which can be globally benchmarked for their quality. These standards will vary depending on the stage of the Pathway. The involvement of a wide range of aligned parties across British tennis in delivering the strategy is critical to the short-term effectiveness and long-term sustainability of the LTA's performance ambitions. He concluded by saying that he is keen to visit Counties and performance centres and added that feedback from Councillors on the direction of the strategy is welcome.

A number of points/questions were raised covering: the suggested use of personality tests to understand how players learn best and to help match them up with the ideal coach (although the current approach is to equip performance coaches to create an environment which provides players and parents with more unique opportunities); the suggestion that consideration be given to asking funded players to give something back to tennis, possibly within their local community; a request for more ITF / Challenger level tournaments to be held in the UK to give competitive play to lower level performance players (whilst noting that, unlike in other countries, the LTA (not the venue) covers the cost of staging these events and so innovative ways of delivering the right level of competition at every level of the pathway is under consideration); and a query as to the need, or otherwise, to come up with options to encourage players to stay in the UK rather than choose the US Scholarship option.

9.3 **Inclusion & Diversity (“I&D”) Plan**

Vicky Williams provided a comprehensive update on delivery against the short-term I&D action plan covering the response to Scott Lloyd's open letter, the proposed appointment of an additional independent Board member (with the increase in the size of the Board to accommodate this having been approved by Sport England), the appointment of the seven BNCs and the education of LTA Colleagues. She outlined the process for finalising the strategy with a view to it being published in April but welcomed any further comments or questions, which she noted will be fed into the discussions. She noted that inclusion is a choice everyone makes every day and is central to achieving the LTA's vision of Tennis Opened Up. She added that everyone has a responsibility and the LTA will be held increasingly and publicly accountable for its choices and so it is important for the LTA to make the choice now to be even more inclusive than it already is. She added that she will present at the May Council meeting on the I&D Strategy.

9.4 **Technology Update**

Rob Mackmurdie presented on the new, robust technology infrastructure that underpins the Digital Transformation programme and Chris Pollard provided an update on the new ClubSpark agreement and the benefits it will provide to venues and coaches that use the

tennis management platform. The replacement for Siebel allows the LTA to speed up the development and roll out of new products as has been seen over the last six months. The LTA now has a Single View of Customer Data, enabling all communications and interactions to be relevant and personalised and providing the platform for a seamless user experience when interacting digitally with the LTA.

9.5 **Learning Management System – LTA Learn**

Lesley Cunningham and Brett Davies provided an overview of LTA Learn which is a centralised platform for all digital learning and LTA professional accreditation. They advised that learning opportunities will be available for Councillors and a website link to the Councillor Course Catalogue will be shared once live (circa mid-March) at which point a comprehensive user guide covering the process will be provided.

10. **Appointments for 2021**

David Rawlinson recorded formally the approval of the appointment of the seven Board Nominated Councillors and thanked Councillors for their quick response to the request for approval by e-mail.

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.

12. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next Council meeting will take place on Thursday 27 May 2021. It will be preceded by the AGM at 10.30 am.

There being no further business, David Rawlinson thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 1.35 pm.

A workshop session took place from 2 pm on the County Governance Reform Project facilitated by Counsel Ltd, the TDC work stream and LTA colleagues. The session provided an opportunity to feedback on the findings from the January County focus groups and the output from it will be fed in and will shape the next phase of the project.