



Crucial AGM vote explained

Author: Paul Stimpson

Posted On: June 22, 2017

The need to secure our current and future funding by Sandra Deaton, Chairman of Table Tennis England.

Table tennis faces a crucial vote at our forthcoming AGM to secure the funding of our sport for the next four years.

I am sure that you will have seen or heard information and speculation about this – some of it confusing and contradictory. I want to use this message to explain some of the key points; why this is so important; and what is at risk for table tennis.

Before I go into the detail, I want to emphasise where we are and what is at stake:

1. The Government has insisted that changes are required to the way all sporting bodies govern themselves if they want to continue to receive public funding;
2. The Board of Table Tennis England has proposed how we can make those changes, while maintaining the democracy of the sport with continuing to elect three directors;
3. Support for the Board will bring certainty and would guarantee £9 million for table tennis in the next four years;
4. Anything else leaves us at serious risk of not complying with the mandatory requirements from the Government and will put our funding in jeopardy. It is a gamble using table tennis's future money as the stake.
5. Sport England, who allocate the funds, have told us that if we do not comply, we will be in breach of the Code and no further payments will be made.
6. We have until October 31 to show that we have taken all necessary steps to comply. That starts at the AGM on July 8, as the Board requires a vote of support from leagues, counties and other Company Members, for these changes to take place.

Background

Sport England, our major funders, has awarded table tennis nearly £9 million for 2017-21. The majority of this, more than £5 million, has been earmarked for the development of our 'core market', namely our clubs and leagues. This is positive news that we will be in a better position to support our grassroots table tennis and we have already launched the Be TT initiative for clubs and leagues.

However, the awards from Sport England is dependent on complying with a new national Code of Sports Governance from the Government. The Code is mandatory for all sports in England who wish to continue to receive public funding and Sport England is enforcing it without exception.

In order to qualify for the £9 million award, we must make some changes to the way we structure our Board and govern ourselves. Table tennis made a significant number of changes four years ago, when it was placed on 'special measures' and were able to secure funding for the past four years. The latest change now required relates to the appointment of the Chairman of the Board and applies to all sports and all Governing Bodies.

Our Board currently consists of three elected directors and a number of appointed directors who are reflective of the table tennis community and the wider business and sporting world. The requirement is that the Chairman of the Board is appointed by the Board, rather than directly elected.

We reached an agreement with a working group of our National Councillors to provide a solution to secure our funding for the next four years, while continuing to protect the three Board positions for democratically elected Directors from the body of the sport.

As a result, the Board has tabled a change – a Proposition – to the Articles. The Proposition from the Board complies with the change required and safeguards the democracy of our association by retaining the three Elected Director positions – all with the title of Elected Deputy Chairman – to be elected by Company Members. They would be eligible to sit on the Committee which nominates the new Chairman – and anyone of them could apply for the position. This would be compliant with the Code.

We are asking for members support through their counties' and leagues' representatives to vote for the Board's Proposition at the AGM (July 8, 2017) and secure our funding.

There has also been an amendment tabled by Martin Clark (Worcestershire), Alan Ransome (Cleveland), Chris Dangerfield (Shropshire), Malcolm Macfarlane (Leamington) and Dot Macfarlane (Coventry), which, Sport England has confirmed, would mean that table tennis was non-compliant with the Code. We would therefore be in breach of the Code and our funding would be suspended.

Having considered the amendment from Martin Clark and others, Sport England has written to inform us:

"A set up as suggested by the amendments from Mr Clark would leave Table Tennis England non-compliant with the governance Code".

"For the removal of any doubt and as per your award agreement, any NGB not meeting the code by 31st October 2017 will be seen to be in breach of the agreement and no further payments will be made to the NGB in question."

Non-compliance would affect all aspects and all levels of our sport, including the new 'Be TT' clubs and leagues development programme; national competitions and tournaments; regional developments; coaching programmes; umpires training; talent development; elite performance; ability to compile ranking lists; membership benefits; cadets, juniors, seniors and veterans events; international competitions; mass participation initiatives; and access to Sport England's open funding programme.

Summary

1. A vote in favour of the Board's Proposition brings certainty. Table tennis will comply with the Code and we will maintain our democracy with three elected directors. It will guarantee £9 million of funding for table tennis from the Government over the next four years – and our programmes for table tennis for

all ages and abilities can continue.

2. A vote against is a risk and a gamble with our future funding at stake. It will make table tennis non-compliant and puts us in breach of the Code.

The Board is asking for support for a secure future for table tennis.

More information

[Please click here to visit the AGM section](#) and download documentation relevant to the 2017 meeting.

[Please click here to read a Q&A](#) with more details.

Downloaded From:

<https://newsarchive.tabletennisengland.co.uk/news/featured-news/crucial-agm-vote-explained/>