

# Feedback Report on Performance

## MAG Meeting with Performance Team – Feedback Report to TTE Board

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## MAG Meeting with Performance Team – Feedback Report to TTE Board

**Present:** MAG Members - All  
Performance Team - Simon Mills, Alan Cooke, Matt Stanforth, Gavin Evans  
Elected Deputy Chairmen - Don Parker, Susie Venner (Board Liaison)

### 1. Overview

MAG met via Zoom with members of the TTE Performance Team on 26 September. The meeting had been arranged to discuss issues that MAG had raised with the Board concerning Governance, Communication and Continuous Improvement.

The meeting took the form of a presentation by the Performance Team lasting about an hour, followed by a discussion in which MAG members asked a range of questions. The discussion part of the meeting lasted about 1 hour and 15 minutes. This allowed for a full exploration of the issues. At the start of the meeting, it was recognised that MAG in its original note to the Board had raised searching questions. In return, MAG recognised that the Performance Team might want to suggest ways in which MAG could help the Team in resolving the issues that had been raised.

This report summarises key issues raised in the discussion and makes recommendations on areas where we think improvements can be made. Don Parker (Elected Deputy Chairman) has offered his own perspective and priorities for change in Appendix A of the report.

We were impressed by the Performance Team. They were knowledgeable and insightful sports performance professionals who clearly worked well together. They had a passion for producing table tennis players who could compete at world level. And they had a clear plan for achieving that goal. MAG wants to help them realise that goal.

### 2. Presentation

The following topics were covered:

- Structure of the Performance Team
- The constraints under which it operated
- The challenge of getting the right balance of “doing” and “sharing the journey”
- The aims of the Performance Team for the players in the squad
- The evidence on which the current strategy was based
- The key elements of the current strategy
- The tools for implementing this strategy
- Only potentially 500 players in the pathway – but 80 are involved in the programme
- Selection policy – one objectively-based policy, but with multiple pathways
- The “Open Door” policy for working with other coaches
- England performance pathway
- Interaction with other coaches – delivering what is needed at club sessions
- What was done in squad sessions had to be reinforced and supplemented in club sessions
- Lessons learned from experiences during lock-down

The above points were then explored in more detail as part of the discussion.

### 3. Discussion

- **Promoting the work of the Performance Team** - How do we get the “story” of the Performance Team out to the wider TT community? Something to consider subsequent to the meeting.
- **Improving the relationship between Clubs and the Performance Team** - An issue raised during recent MAG discussions with clubs had been how to improve the relationship between Clubs and the Performance Team. Clubs were not only receptive to this – they were keen to do so. In reply, the Team said that it had to make a judgement on the balance between spending time doing coaching with players and spending time communicating and engaging with clubs, coaches and parents. There was no easy way of assessing what the correct balance should be. The focus over the last two years have been on working with young players. However, there is now an excellent team in place. This provides the head-room for working more closely with other coaches. This provided an opportunity to improve the relationships with clubs, coaches and parents.
- **Balancing training and competition** - How do players balance competition and training, and how to support clubs in organising important competitions whilst doing justice to players on their own performance journey. In reply, the Team said “time-on-task” is essential, but realistically, we are not able to match what is provided by professional clubs in Sweden, Germany and France. The conflict between competition and training is acknowledged but it was important the players entered the right competitions. Inappropriate selection of which competitions to enter ran the risk of “learning how to lose”. The forthcoming competition review would no doubt address this issue.
- **Spending money wisely** - How do parents decide how best to spend money? £1200 to participate in National Training Squads or spend it on entering two tournaments in Europe? There is not enough time to do everything – eventually you run out of time and money. There was no simple answer. It depended on where the player was on their individual journey and what the players needed. As players get better, the demands on their time increase – this is the nature of success. The Team had developed the Player Skill, Athletic Skill, Competition Skill (PAC) model to help address this issue. Players might miss out on selection by not having secured sufficient ranking points. But dealing with setbacks is a key part of becoming a top player. The resilience of the team supporting the player is really important.
- **Balancing Club and National Training** –It is essential that there are strong squads at club level, but players’ involvement in national sessions could detract from the success of club sessions. The point was acknowledged. But it should be used as a motivator – the club sessions being seen as a gateway to the national squads. The Performance Team emphasised that they believe the best outcomes are achieved when club and national coaches are working as a team conveying clear and consistent messages to players. Whilst participation in the national squads was strongly encouraged it is not compulsory for selection for England teams. Selection was based on objective, performance-based criteria. Players not in the squad would still be selected for England teams if they met the selection criteria.

- ***Is the quality of coaching of sufficient standard overall?*** - Inside the programme, yes. For the entry to the Hopes level, coaches need to take players through the basics and we had sufficient coaches for doing this. There were fewer coaches who could provide what was required at the higher level but this was improving.
- ***Is the competition structure sufficiently supportive of performance?*** – There will be a competition review underway in 2021. This needs to pull out what’s good in the current structure. But it should also identify what is and isn’t meeting the needs of the sport and what is and isn’t meeting the needs of performance. One area where we might follow the lead of the ITTF is in ensuring that players earn the right to get into certain competitions. Not all competitions should be open to everyone.
- ***Personal Mentoring*** – the team work and ambition of the Performance Team is impressive and they are clearly developing a rigorous and highly driven environment so that young players can achieve what they are capable of. Young players are also in the middle of their own personal development journey – physical, mental and emotional. Should there be someone within the set-up whose focus is on building relationships from a well-being point of view, ie someone who can act as a personal mentor? The Team is tackling this by connecting up different parts of the pathway. In particular, lock-down has been used so that junior players could engage with top senior players. Q&A sessions had been held with Paul Drinkhall, Liam Pitchford, Tin Tin Ho and others. These have been well received by juniors and seniors alike. The aim is to continue these engagements, using technology to facilitate the interactions. The DiSE programme with its wide coverage of sporting excellent might help with this approach.
- ***The need for self-funding*** – this was the number one issue raised by parents and coaches, and indeed throughout the table tennis community. This was something that MAG should raise with the Board and the wider community. A key value in table tennis was that it was open to all and that no one should be prevented from reaching their full potential due to lack of funds. It was recognised that this was an emotive issue, particularly in the current challenging economic times. It was emphasised that any players that needed financial assistance should speak to the Performance Team. There are grants that can be accessed and the majority of players in the junior programmes were receiving some financial assistance from these grants. The Team would welcome any role that MAG could play in exploring options for securing support for the development of young players.
- ***Do the structures within TTE and table tennis more widely support performance?*** – There is a need to be single-minded to succeed in elite level support. Do we need a fundamental review to ensure that performance is supported throughout the organisation. The Team felt that they needed to share the story better, ensure there is wider engagement so that the table tennis community buy into the story. MAG has a role in supporting this aspect of the Performance Team’s role.
- ***Domestic Competition*** – it was recognised that domestic competition needed to be stronger. There were two mutually reinforcing ways of doing this. One was to bring international competitions to the UK. The other was to strengthen domestic players. Strengthening domestic competitions would mean domestic players would be better prepared for when they competed internationally.

- **Fitness tests** – the role of fitness tests such as “Yo-Yo” and “Bleep” were frequently questioned. Was too much emphasis put on these tests in assessing players? If players are going to succeed at world-level, they need to be physically fit. The sooner players can learn to do this the better. For the younger age groups, it brings home the element of working hard physically during training sessions. The more you can be conditioned the better. Young players like progression and it shows that if they commit “time-on-task” they will get better and better.
- **Experiences During Lock-Down** – The Team had been using Zoom to communicate with squad players during lock-down. Aled Howell had run various coaching education Webinars which had all been very well received. These experiences of using new approaches to communicating would be continued after lock-down.
- **Selection Policy** – following a discussion on Performance issues at a National Council meeting we discussed with the Performance Team their approach to selection to represent England. The approach adopted follows UK Sport best practice and is based on pre-determined and transparent performance-based criteria. An appeals procedure for non-selection is also provided for – again this has to be against the performance-based criteria. As a result of the following UK Sport best practice, the scope for discretion by the selectors is limited. In order to receive funding from UK Sport, TTE is obliged to have a selection policy that meets the UK Sport best practice approach.
- **Open Invitation** – there was an open invitation for MAG members, either singly or collectively, to see the training sessions in action. This also applied to coaches more widely.

#### 4. Summary of Key Questions and Answers

Table 1 summarises the key questions that we raised with the Performance along with their answers and our comments. These comments then feed into the Recommendations and Things to Consider in the next section.

**Table 1 – Key Feedback**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b><i>Governance Issues</i></b>		
1. What are the aims of the Performance Team in respect of player development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All players should be able to find out what they are capable of</li> <li>Produce players who are competitive at European U-18 level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We agree that these are sensible aims</li> </ul>
2. What is the strategy for delivering these aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a long gestation period for reaching elite level in table tennis</li> <li>The need to start with players at a young age (9 years, possibly younger)</li> <li>Improving the ability of young players to manage their own performance</li> <li>Getting higher levels of self-belief and demystifying opponents</li> <li>Improving levels of physical &amp; mental fitness</li> <li>A greater focus on competition at European level</li> <li>Providing the basis for players to improve away from squad sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We support this strategy</li> <li>It addresses key failings as identified by the evidence gathering (see Q4)</li> </ul>
3. Who has developed the strategy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The strategy has been built and developed by table tennis coaches within the Team with in-depth experience of elite level table tennis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These are the correct people to develop the strategy of the Performance Team</li> </ul>
4. What is the evidence-base for the strategy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strongly influenced by comparisons with other European countries, particularly at the Euro-minis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We were impressed by the level of detail that went into developing the strategy</li> </ul>
<b><i>Implementation</i></b>		
5. Are you satisfied that the core coaching team have all the relevant skills?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All members of the team came across to us as outstanding and passionate table tennis professionals</li> </ul>
6. What are the performance targets that are set for the squad members?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They are a mix of technical, mental and fitness elements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We were satisfied with the mix described</li> </ul>
7. Are the team communicating the strategy with the TT community? Is the strategy communicated with clubs, coaches & parents?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This has been done when the opportunity has arisen such as the National Coaches Conference and similar occasions. It has also been done at squad sessions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We believe this is an area for improvement and requires more time/resource to be spent on it</li> <li>We recognised that steps to improve this have already been taken</li> </ul>

Question	Answer	Comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greater use could be made of on-line tools provide as a means for improving communication</li> </ul>
8. Are the team actively engaging with leading clubs & coaches to build strong rapport?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an "Open Door" policy for coaches to engage with the squad sessions.</li> <li>The intention is to give coaches the chance to participate so that they can see the benefits and want to be involved in squad sessions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Open Door policy does not go far enough.</li> <li>It needs to be more proactive. This is recognised by the team</li> <li>We see the area of improving links with clubs &amp; coaches as a priority area for improvement</li> </ul>
9. Is there a mechanism for players, parents and coaches to provide feedback on squad sessions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently, there is no formal method for providing feedback.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal feedback would provide a good basis for continuous improvement</li> </ul>
10. What personal mentoring takes place for squad members?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The opportunity had been taken during lock-down to hold Q&amp;A sessions with Paul Drinkhall, Liam Pitchford and Tin Tin Ho. As expected, these had been well received</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given the pressure on young players, additional personal mentoring should be provided. Ideally, this should be provided by someone outside the squad.</li> </ul>
11. Is sufficient use being made of modern technology to communicate and engage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Since lock-down, the Team have made greater use of on-line training and Zoom to engage with players and coaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We would encourage the continued adoption of the on-line techniques applied during lock-down</li> </ul>
<b>Other Issues</b>		
12. Why is so much emphasis placed on results in European competition (compared to domestic competitions)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Domestic competition is not strong enough or deep enough to provide the appropriate challenges for our players. But greater emphasis should be place on explaining this.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is in the interests of the Performance Team for the standard of domestic competition to improve</li> </ul>
13. Is it correct to place so much emphasis physical fitness (compared to table tennis skills)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High levels of physical fitness are now essential to compete at elite levels. But these are only one component of the player assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We agree that the emphasis on improved fitness is correct</li> </ul>
14. Are appointments to the Performance Team appropriately advertised?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full-time, paid appointments are advertised. Short term or volunteer roles are not always advertised.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is the opportunity to provide more transparency around who is involved in the Performance Team.</li> </ul>
15. What are the principles of the Selection Policy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pre-determined, objective performance-based criteria</li> <li>An appeals procedure</li> <li>Scope for discretion is limited</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We agree it is appropriate to follow UK Sport guidance.</li> </ul>

## 5. Recommendations and Things To Consider

Our recommendations and things to consider primarily focus on issues relating to communication and engagement. The strategy does result in some quite subtle points that need careful explanation followed by engagement to ensure buy in from players, clubs and coaches. The recommendations are discussed below and summarised in Table 2.

### **(a) Recommendations**

- **Pro-active Engagement with Clubs & Coaches** – There is only so much that can be done within the Training Camps. As the Team acknowledge – most of the work is done away from the Camps. And that’s where the bulk of the 10-20 hours per week training that is required for elite performance takes place. The “Open Door” policy for working with coaches is the correct one and we recognise that those coaches who wish to work with the Performance Team need to demonstrate their commitment. Nonetheless, we also recommend a more pro-active engagement with clubs and coaches. This would include quarterly on-line briefings with the personal coaches of all the players in the squad. An annual “Open Day” for clubs and coaches at one of the training sessions will help spread understanding of the requirements for participating in the national squads. A regional component to this would be useful. We understand that the Performance Team are already examining all these approaches.
- **Sharing the journey** – we were impressed with hearing how the strategy had been formulated. We recommend that details of this journey are shared with both coaches and member so that they gain an understanding of the strategy and its finer details - resources, beliefs, perception, stereotype threat, gestation period and domestic competition standard. A simple way of doing this would be to make the presentation available via the website. A more effective way would be to produce a YouTube video based on the presentation which showed the interaction between the team. Presentations at Regional Conferences are also an effective way of sharing the journey.
- **Personal Mentoring** – the demands of becoming an elite performer are high. We recommend identifying someone outside the Team who could provide Personal Mentoring when required. We understand the Team are looking at ways of engaging more pro-actively with the parents of players. This is welcomed.
- **Participation in Training Squads** – we understand and support the decision to only involve in the squads those who want to work with the Performance Team. Some will want to make their own journey to high level performance. But this should be the exception rather than the rule. We recommend that the aim should be for all players who are considered for selection to be in the national training squads.
- **Self-Funding** – we recommend that the Board take a look at this issue with a view to seeing how it might be addressed by the table tennis community (eg through the TTE AGM). MAG has some ideas which it will be happy to share with the Board.
- **TTE Competition Review** – we recommend that the Performance Team take the opportunity of the forthcoming Competition Review to set out how they would like competitions to be structured to assist the Team in producing elite level players. The Performance Team strongly share that view. We understand and support the current focus on participation in

European competitions. But the Performance Team have a vested interest in improving domestic competitions so that our players are better prepared when they compete internationally.

**(b) Things to Consider**

- **Promote the Pathway** - promote the Hopes and Aspires groups, and the numbers involved on the Pathway. This could explain what the selection process is and how many hours a week commitment at home/local clubs and at squad camps these entail. Explain how much it costs, what funding is available, that funding is sourced for members where demand is needed the most. The Bronze, Silver and Gold training awards should be promoted and shared with clubs and coaches so that they know the requirements for progression to the national squads. The Team are already considering a "Talent Handbook" which could fulfil this role.
- **Making information regularly available** – we suggest regular updates (perhaps quarterly) via the website of progress in implementing the strategy and the evolving thinking. Key issues emerging from training squads could be highlighted along with the personal journeys of squad participants. Explicit recognition of the compromises that clubs/coaches/players have to make is helpful in ensuring buy-in. The "Talent Handbook" will set out what is required at each stage of a player's development.
- **Connecting with Clubs and Coaches** - there would be benefit in knowing which coaches & clubs players on the performance pathway connect with. A register held by the performance team to include that detail so that comms can be set up as necessary. This may or may not exist already and players may connect with more than once coach or club. There would be further benefit to other players that may have dropped out of the performance program being able to access published resources. Players may have dropped out due to financial or other constraints but still have the potential to achieve. Use of TT Memberships/Sport80 as a means for maintaining and building such links should be considered. Members of the Performance Team are currently visiting clubs on an ad hoc basis. This is welcome. But the next step is to make this a more structured approach.
- **Broadening the base** - we need to broaden our base of both players and coaches, and have already noted that there is only so much that can be done within the squads themselves. Using existing technology, it would be interesting to run a pilot project delivered by the performance coaches to be accessed remotely at selected places with relevant coaches and players attending. Lead coach at each venue to control the session with assistance from other coaches and sparring partners, lead coach to monitor and feed- back to central. The on-line time could be limited to an initial introduction, interspersed as necessary with the local lead coach controlling the session itself. This way the Team could share what they are doing within the squads. This in turn would result in reaching a greater number of players and more frequently. It could help deal with the issue of creating a local void when the top players were away at National training and competition.
- **Engagement with Parents** – we suggest an annual on-line discussion with parents so that they can hear about the overall coaching strategy and put questions to the coaches.

- **Feedback from squad participants** – greater use can be made of formal feedback processes to help make the squad sessions as effective as possible. We understand that the questions to be included in a feedback form are currently being developed with the help of the TTE Insights team. The feedback form should be ready for use in the second quarter of 2021.
- **Using New Technology** – this is a cross-cutting theme that facilitates communication and engagement. It was great to hear that the Team is already moving in that direction, and experiences during lock-down have been positive. The plan for a series of Podcasts is welcome as is the use of on-line learning tools such as Moodle. We have been pleased to hear that the second lock-down has again sparked new approaches to communicating with players, coaches and clubs. In particular, video podcasts have been produced to broaden and strengthen the links with clubs.

## 6. Next Steps

We've used this Feedback Report to capture the issues discussed with the Performance Team. We've then made suggestions on the areas where we think improvements can be made.

In general, we think the aims of the Team are sound and welcome the evidence-based approach of the strategy. The Team are impressive in terms of their obvious in-depth knowledge of high-performance table tennis. Areas for improvement are largely focussed on implementation – particularly in terms of engagement, communication and creative use of feedback.

We recognise that there are a significant number of recommendations in the report. That is deliberate. In this Feedback Report we wanted to capture everything. The principal next step has been to develop an Action Plan. This involved the Performance Team reviewing and prioritising the recommendations. Timelining was then required.

The Action Plan is provided at Appendix B. The Performance Team own this Plan and it can also be used by the Board for monitoring progress.

Finally, we would like to emphasise that this report should be seen as the start of the process for improving our young players and ensure an exciting future for Team England. The report has addressed a number of important issues. But it does not claim to have addressed all of the issues. More work needs to be done. The Performance Team have asked MAG to continue to provide input and be a sounding board for ideas. For our part, we want to engage with the table tennis community so that we ourselves can be advised as to what further steps need to be taken to ensure the Youth Squads operate as effectively as possible, and that our young players have the opportunity to reach their full potential. That process of engagement will start once the report has been published.

**Table 2 - Summary of Recommendations and Things to Consider**

No	Recommendation	Examples of Implementation Actions
<b><i>“Recommendations”</i></b>		
1	Pro-actively Engage with Clubs & Coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly on-line briefings with the personal coaches of all the players in the squad.</li> <li>• An annual “Open Day” for clubs and coaches at one of the training sessions</li> <li>• A regional component, if possible</li> </ul>
2	Share the Journey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share the details of the journey with both coaches and member</li> <li>• Enable them to gain an understanding of the strategy and its finer details</li> </ul>
3	Introduce Personal Mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify someone outside the Team who could provide Personal Mentoring</li> </ul>
4	Improve Participation in Training Squads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All players who are considered for selection should be in the national training squads.</li> </ul>
5	Review Self-Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The TTE Board to take a look at this issue</li> <li>• How might it be addressed by the table tennis community</li> </ul>
6	Input into TTE Competition Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Performance Team take the opportunity of the forthcoming Competition Review to set out how they would like competitions to be structured to assist the Team in producing elite level players.</li> </ul>
<b><i>“Things to Consider”</i></b>		
7	Promote the Pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain what process is for selection for the squad</li> <li>• How many hours a week commitment at home/local clubs and at squad camps.</li> <li>• Explain how much it costs, what funding is available.</li> <li>• Share the Bronze, Silver and Gold training awards with clubs and coaches</li> <li>• A “Talent Handbook” could fulfil this role.</li> </ul>
8	Make Information Regularly Available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular updates via the website of progress in implementing the strategy and the evolving thinking.</li> <li>• Key issues emerging from training squads could be highlighted along with the personal journeys of squad participants.</li> </ul>
9	Connect with Clubs and Coaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing which coaches and clubs players on the performance pathway to connect with.</li> <li>• A register to include that detail so that comms can be set up as necessary.</li> </ul>
10	Broaden the Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use on-line technology so that squad coaches can engage with a wider range of club coaches and players.</li> </ul>
11	Engage with Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An annual on-line discussion with parents</li> </ul>
12	Seek Feedback from Squad Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make greater use of formal feedback processes to help make the squad sessions as effective as possible.</li> </ul>
13	Use New Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on the positive experiences during lock-down, eg podcasts and on-line learning.</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX A – Feedback and Priorities from Don Parker

I joined the TTE Board earlier in 2020, a new role for me in my table tennis life which has included playing and coaching at international level. I am also an experienced administrator for sport at the high performance level and a regular commentator at major table tennis events. During my brief tenure, I have worked closely with the Performance Team and I would like to thank Simon Mills, Alan Cooke and their colleagues, who have been very supportive of my involvement.

Thanks also to Neil Hurford, Chairman of MAG, and to all MAG members who gave me the opportunity to be involved in this review. Clearly this report is a very carefully researched and thoughtful piece of work, of which I share the assessment and recommendations.

I am particular keen that we address self funding. Whilst the Performance Team have done a great job in accessing various “pockets of funding”, we need to ensure that TTE support our young players financially when they are both training and competing for England. We cannot have a situation when the cost to the parents/guardians of our leading young players is prohibitive.

We also need to ensure that our domestic, cadet/junior structure is fit for purpose and subsequently prioritised by our young players. This will require direction from the Performance Team and support from various TTE committees, including ranking, competitions and calendar.

Our Performance Team have established an excellent squad training structure with the Hopes Squads, led by Kelly Sibley, the Aspire Squads led by Ryan Jenkins and the England Junior Squads led by Marcus Gustafson. All the work conducted in these squads is overseen by the Technical Director, Alan Cooke. We now need to ensure that when the players return to their home environment, where they spend the majority of their time, that they have the necessary support particularly in terms of facilities, practice partners and coaching expertise. Alan Cooke and his team are working hard to ensure this is the case and there is no doubt that communication within the squads has improved significantly.

There are great challenges ahead but by working together in the right areas, we can improve our young players and ensure an exciting future for Team England.

Don Parker  
Elected Deputy Chairman

## APPENDIX B - Action Plan

The following Action Plan has been developed by the TTE Performance Team in response to the recommendations in the report.

	<b>MAG Recommendation / Performance Team Action Points</b>	<b>Current Update – January 2021</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>
<i>Proactive engagement with clubs and coaches</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quarterly online briefings.</li> <li>2. Annual Open Day for clubs and coaches.</li> <li>3. Regional Component for engagement with clubs and coaches.</li> <li>4. Register of which clubs / coaches connect.</li> <li>5. Players who have dropped out being able to access published resource.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Due to current restrictions – delivery of national sessions has been moved online. Coaches to be invited to selected sessions in February.</li> <li>2. Annual Open day on hold due to current restrictions.</li> <li>3. A version of a regional component is being considered as part of our player identification process – information to follow.</li> <li>4. Following invite to coaches for online sessions – register to be created and shared with MAG.</li> <li>5. Players have been given the skills awards relevant to their level. Talent handbook will set out standards expected and each level. Various training clips and information to be shared through social media / website / coach learning portal.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In progress.</li> <li>2. Not yet started (due to current restrictions).</li> <li>3. In progress – planned for Q4, 2021.</li> <li>4. In progress.</li> <li>5. In progress – planned for Q2, 2021.</li> </ol>

	<b>MAG Recommendation / Performance Team Action Points</b>	<b>Current Update – January 2021</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>
<i>Sharing the Journey</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communicating the journey we have been on to this point – understanding of the strategy.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National Council presentation with audio commentary to be shared the media channels.</li> <li>2. New Facebook group created to share various performance squad activity and information.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In progress – Q1, 2021.</li> <li>2. Completed.</li> </ol>
<i>Personal Mentoring</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identifying someone outside the team who could provide personal mentoring when required.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify a point of contact outside the current performance team that that can provide personal mentoring to those in the pathway.</li> <li>2. We are currently work in partnership with ‘Working with Parents in Sport’ to develop a range of specific resources and build some online workshops that will help us work more pro-actively with pathway parents.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Not yet started – planned for Q2/3 2021.</li> <li>2. In progress.</li> </ol>
<i>Participation in Training Squads</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Aim should be for all players to who are considered for selection to teams, to be considered for selection to national training squads.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Selection to training squads is open to all players who wish to be considered.</li> <li>2. Greater communication on how to get involved, selection processes, programmes and commitment required.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In progress.</li> <li>2. In progress – planned for Q2, 2021.</li> </ol>

	<b>MAG Recommendation / Performance Team Action Points</b>	<b>Current Update – January 2021</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>
<b>Self-Funding</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board to look at this issue and how it might be addressed by the TT Community.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paper submitted by performance to National Council regarding funding for national squads.</li> <li>Board to review.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed (see Appendix B).</li> <li>In progress (with Board).</li> </ol>
<b>Competition Review</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance to take opportunity to set out how competitions should be structured.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members of the Performance department to feed into the forthcoming competition review.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In progress.</li> </ol>
<b>Promote the Pathway</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the selection process, commitment needed, funding available.</li> <li>Promotion of England Skills Awards.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of the talent handbook which will outline the performance pathway as a whole.</li> <li>England Skills Awards from Foundation / Progression / Bronze level to be made public on the Coaches Learning Portal.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In progress – planned for Q2, 2021.</li> <li>In progress – planned for Q2, 2021.</li> </ol>
<b>Regular Updates</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly updates via the website.</li> <li>Highlight personal journeys of squad participants.</li> <li>Recognition of compromises clubs/coaches/players have to make to help get more buy-in.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First update due in March.</li> <li>Player profiles of squad members being updated through website and Facebook group.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not yet started – scheduled for end of Q1, 2021.</li> <li>In progress.</li> <li>Completed.</li> </ol>

	<b>MAG Recommendation / Performance Team Action Points</b>	<b>Current Update – January 2021</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>
<i><b>Broadening the Base</b></i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using technology to remote access coaches and clubs.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In conjunction with the coaching department, we will be hosting a live session with some of the senior players that will cover elements of the first three England Skills Awards with discussions around training &amp; learning principles.</li> <li>Future live session in conjunction with national training camps to be reviewed following return to training camps.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In progress – planned for Q2, 2021.</li> <li>Not yet started – Planned for Q3, 2021.</li> </ol>
<i><b>Engagement with Parents</b></i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual online discussion to take them through strategy and have an opportunity to discuss any questions.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due to squads being selected only recently and the current restrictions, this is to be arranged at an appropriate time when normal training can resume.</li> <li>Are partnering with 'Working with Parents in Sport' in the development of resources and future online / in person sessions to support pathway parents.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not yet started – to be reviewed once full training is able to resume.</li> <li>In progress, planned for Q2, 2021.</li> </ol>
<i><b>Feedback from Squad Participants</b></i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal feedback processes to make the squads as effective as possible.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working in conjunction with our Insight Officer to develop a questionnaire for players / parents to complete to gain feedback to be used for pathway development.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not yet started, planned for Q2/3, 2021.</li> </ol>

	<b>MAG Recommendation / Performance Team Action Points</b>	<b>Current Update – January 2021</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>
<i>Using New Technology</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Using technology to improve communication and engagement.</li> <li>2. Podcast series.</li> <li>3. Use of Moodle as a learning platform.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Set up of TT Fit as feedback method between player / local coach / national coaching team.</li> <li>2. Currently in production.</li> <li>3. The Coaches Learning platform has been set up, with performance content to begin to be uploaded.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete.</li> <li>2. In progress, planned for release in Q2, 2021.</li> <li>3. In progress.</li> </ol>