

ENGLAND HOCKEY AGM 2020

Minutes



Meeting Name:	England Hockey Annual General meeting		
Venue:	Delivered electronically through Go To Webinar		
Date:	15.9.20		
Lead:	Mike Stoddard (MS)		
Note taker:	Helen Clarke (HC)		
Start time:	1900	End time:	2045

PANEL:

Mike Stoddard (MS), President of England Hockey
 Liz Pelling (LP), Vice President and Chair of Governance Review working group
 Royston Hoggarth (RH), Chair of the Board
 Nick Pink (NP), Chief Executive of England Hockey
 Ian Wilson (IW), Finance and Administration Director
 Rich Beer (RB), Development Director
 Graham Royle, IT and Business Systems Manager and Technical Meeting Organiser

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ed Barney (EB) Performance Director, Richard Sykes (Independent Non-Executive Director), Kate Swann (Independent Non-Executive Director), Andy Hunt (Independent Non-Executive Director), Katy Roberts (Membership Elected Non-Executive Director – outgoing), Angela Durnin (Membership Elected Non-Executive Director elect), Simon Mantell (Membership Elected Non-Executive Director elect), Chris Reece (Vice President).

Clubs and Universities:

Abingdon HC, Adastral HC, Addiscombe HC, Alderley Edge HC, Aldershot & Farnham HC, Alford and District HC, Alton HC, Ashford (Kent) HC, Ashford (Middlesex) HC, Aylesbury HC, BAC HC, Basingstoke HC, Bebington HC, Bedford HC, Beeston HC, Ben Rhydding HC, Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead HC, Bexleyheath & Belvedere HC, Bicester HC, Blackheath and Elthamians HC, Blandford & Sturminster Newton HC, Blueharts HC, Bodmin HC, Boots HC, Boston Spa HC, Bourne Deeping HC, Bournemouth HC, Bowdon HC, British Airways Hayes Ladies HC, Bromley and Beckenham HC, Brooklands Poynton HC, Buckingham HC, Burgess Hill HC, Canterbury HC, Carlisle HC, Chairman Wallingford HC, Cheam HC, Chelmsford HC, Cheltenham Civil Service HC, Cheltenham HC, Chester HC, Coventry University, Crawley HC, Crewe Vagrants HC, Crowborough HC, Deeside Ramblers HC, Devizes HC, Doncaster HC, Durham University, Ealing HC, East Devon HC, East Grinstead HC, Eastbourne HC, Eastcote HC, Ely City HC, Enigma HC, Evergreens ladies HC, Finchfield HC, Fleet and Ewshot HC, Fylde HC, Gosport Borough HC, Gravesham & Wellcome HC, Guildford HC, Hailsham HC, Hampstead and Westminster HC, Harrow HC, Haslemere HC, Havant HC, Hendon & Mill Hill HC, Hereford HC, Herne Bay HC, Holcombe HC, Honeybees HC, Horsforth Ladies HC, Hull Circle Ladies HC, Huntingdon HC, ICSM Ladies' HC, IESHC, Ipswich Seven HC, KAHC, Kettering HC, Keynsham HC, King's & Alleyn's HC, Kingston Upon Hull HC, Shipston HC, Leeds Adel HC, Leighton Buzzard HC, Letchworth HC, Lichfield HC, London Edwardians HC, London Wayfarers HC, Luton Town HC, Lytham HC, Macclesfield HC, Maidstone HC, Maldon HC, March Town HC, Marlborough HC, Marlow HC, Melton HC, Mid Somerset HC, Mid Sussex HC, Milton Keynes HC, Mossley Hill HC, New Beccehamians HC, Newbury & Thatcham HC, Newmarket HC, North Stafford HC, North Wilts HC, Norwich City HC, NPL HC, Okehampton Ladies HC, Old Freeman's HC, Old Kingstonian HC, Old Loughtonians HC, Old Plymouthians and Mannamedian HC, Old Silhillians HC, Oxford Hawks HC, Penzance HC, PGSOB HC, Phoenix & Ranelagh HC, Phoenix Blues HC, Plymouth Marjons HC, Poole HC, Potters Bar HC, Purley Walcountians HC, Ramgarhia HC (Southall), Reading HC, Redland Ladies HC, Reigate Priory HC, Remnants HC, Repton HC, Rochford HC, Rotherham HC, Roundhill LHC, Rugby & East Warwickshire HC, Sanderstead HC, Scarlet Runners HC, Sevenoaks HC, Shefford and Sandy HC, Slazenger HC, South Berkshire HC, South Lakes HC, Southend and Benfleet HC, Southwick HC, Spalding HC, Spencer HC, St Ives HC, Staines HC,

ENGLAND HOCKEY AGM 2020

Minutes



Stone HC, Stratford HC, Surbiton HC, Sutton Coldfield HC, Tadcaster Magnets HC, Taunton Vale HC, Team Surrey Spartans HC, Thame HC, Thirsk HC, Timperley HC, Trinity Mid-Whitgiftian HC, Triton HC, United Services Portsmouth HC, University of Leeds HC, Upminster HC, Vauxhall Recreation HC, Wakefield HC, Waltham Forest HC, Wanderers HC, Wapping HC, West Derby HC, West Hampstead HC, Wilmslow HC, Winchmore Hill & Enfield HC, Winscombe Ladies HC, Woking HC, Wolverhampton and Tettenhall HC, Wootton Wanderers HC, Wulfric Ladies HC, Yateley HC.

Hockey Associations and Hockey Umpire Associations:

East Region HA, Midland Region HA, North HA, Southern Counties HA, West HA, Bedfordshire County HA, Berkshire HUA, Birmingham Counties HUA, Buckinghamshire HA, Coventry & North Warwickshire HA, Derbyshire HA, Devon HA, Devon HUA, East Regional HUA, Gloucestershire HA, Hampshire HUA, Herts & Beds HUA, Herefordshire Gloucestershire & Wiltshire HUA, Kent HA, Kent HUA, Lancashire Central HUA, Leicestershire & Rutland HA, Lincolnshire County HUA, Middlesex HUA, Northumberland & Durham HUA, Nottinghamshire HA, NPUA, Oxfordshire HA, Oxfordshire HUA, Somerset HA, Southern Counties HUA, Suffolk HA, Surrey HA, Surrey HUA, Sussex HA, Sussex HUA, United Kingdom Armed Forces (UKAF) Hockey Association, Wiltshire County HA, Yorkshire HA.

PROXY INTENTIONS

357 members had appointed the Chair to act as their proxy (weighted total of 874 votes).

President's Welcome.

MS welcomed delegates to the adjourned 2020 Annual General Meeting of England Hockey informing the meeting that it is a legal requirement for the business to hold an AGM within 18 months of the previous meeting and in view of the current pandemic restrictions, an electronic virtual meeting was felt to be most appropriate.

The panel members were introduced and delegates were provided with some 'housekeeping' to support the smooth execution of the electronic meeting.

Civica Election Services (CES) were engaged to administer the voting on the three resolutions put to the membership. Members who had not submitted a proxy in advance and who were eligible to vote were informed that they would receive a voting slip electronically during the early part of the meeting which should be returned before 9pm to CES who would undertake the count.

MS formally gave notice that as Chair of the Meeting, and in accordance with clause 29 of the Articles of England Hockey, he was demanding a poll in respect of all agenda items involving voting, resulting in the weighted voting system as outlined in the Calling Notice. The meeting was informed that proxies lodged with the Chair on a discretionary basis would be voted for in favour of all resolutions listed in the Agenda.

The results of the poll were expected to be received from CES on the morning of 16 September and would be shared with delegates and published on the England Hockey website.

Item 5 has been withdrawn from the agenda as the board did not think it appropriate to propose an increase in affiliation fee at this time.

Item 7 has been withdrawn from the agenda as it was originally included in error.

1. Apologies for absence.

In receipt of apologies from:

Sheila Morrow (President of GB Hockey)

Clubs

ICSM Ladies HC, Maldon HC, Taw Valley HC

ENGLAND HOCKEY AGM 2020

Minutes



2. Approve the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 19 March 2019.

MS advised that these had been circulated with the papers and asked for any comments on accuracy.

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of last year's meeting.

3. Receive the Directors' Annual Report and approve the Financial Statements and Auditor's report.

Royston Hoggarth welcomed delegates commenting on the value of enabling a facility where so many members could join the meeting and the potential to review how England Hockey AGM's are conducted in the future. Covid-19 has created challenges around the world, leading to England Hockey thinking how we do things differently both within governance [holding the AGM electronically] and on the field of play.

RH recorded collective thanks to:

- Sally Munday (previous Chief Exec) who moved on to Chief Executive of UK Sport just over a year ago. Formal record of our thanks for everything Sally did for England Hockey and acknowledge her achievements including international successes, participation growth, involvement in the development of FIH Pro League and Big Stadium Hockey.
- Sue Bodycomb (previous President) was formally thanked with RH commenting that he looked forward to welcoming Sue back to England Hockey events.
- Katy Roberts (outgoing MENED) was formally thanked for her contribution to the England Hockey Board. RH recognised Katy as an exceptional member of the team contributing legal and commercial acumen to the Board.
- Ian Wilson (retiring Finance Director), recognised as a stalwart of the business. Formal thanks were recorded for everything Ian has done for hockey.

RH provided a narrative to his report in the 2019 Annual Report (which can be found within the AGM papers) including reference to the inaugural FIH Pro League; Big Stadium Hockey (BSH), with thanks to the now former Harlequins Chair David Morgan; the BSH technology innovation providing the potential to increase the number of venues available to host hockey around the country in addition to Lee Valley HTC; Belfius EuroHockey Championships; Tokyo 2020 Olympic Qualifiers; Hockey Heroes; Flyerz Hockey with thanks to Kate and Helen Richardson-Walsh for their support; Walking Hockey and Masters hockey.

RH identified the work of England Hockey in the area of Diversity and Inclusion stating that D+I is taken very seriously by England Hockey and the Board. Referencing recent accusations of endemic racism and subsequent media coverage, RH reaffirmed that England Hockey welcome feedback, had begun work in this area over 18 months ago with the establishment of a focus group and are continuing to investigate and put in place new measures to address any issues identified. Findings, conclusions and recommendations will be shared with clubs in the coming months. RH reassured members that England Hockey finds racial, homophobic and similar behaviours abhorrent and will do everything possible to remove such issues from our sport.

On reflection of Board representation and governance, RH noted that EH's biggest funders are DCMS, UK Sport and Sport England who have clear objectives for NGB's around representation on boards and that RH and NP are working with these organisations to ensure England Hockey is properly represented. Gender equality is a challenge with Sally Munday and Katy Roberts leaving the Board however the recent recruitment of Membership Elected Non-Executive Directors (MENED) resulted in only one female candidate. There were a very high calibre of candidates put forward and RH delighted to welcome Angela Durnin and Simon Mantell who has the elite playing experience to represent England Hockey on the Great Britain Hockey Board.

ENGLAND HOCKEY AGM 2020

Minutes



RH confirmed he spoke to every MENED candidate that applied and put on record his thanks for their time and interest, adding that the challenge as Chair is to ensure the right skills and balance (gender and otherwise) whilst respecting the processes.

On the process to succeed Finance Director Ian Wilson, RH commented again on the quality of the candidate pool, with Kuldeep Kaur being appointed by a panel made up of ACA qualified Board directors. Kaur has spent 9 years with RFU and is welcomed in joining the Board in October 2020.

RH closed with a reflection on his attendance at the first weekend of the recent hockey finals at the Nottingham Hockey Centre commenting that it was fantastic to see hockey back on the field of play and what a great facility adding his best wishes to all on a successful season. RH then handed to Nick Pink.

Nick Pink began by recognising the record number of people in attendance (over 260 delegates) due to the meeting being hosted virtually and this being a consideration moving forward. Acknowledging RH's report, NP also referred delegates to the 2019 Annual Report.

On Covid 19, NP referenced the guidance published in the recent return to hockey plan, aligned to the government guidance and with the announcement of Step 5, we look forward to league Hockey returning. Congratulations were offered to Surbiton Men and Women on their 2019/2020 Premier Division titles and to all those who achieved success last year, culminating in the National Championships at Nottingham Hockey Centre held this September. Thanks to David Griffiths and the team at NHC, and the England Hockey team for making the finals happen. England Hockey does not underestimate the challenges faced during this period both within our sport and more broadly in society but recent activity has given us hope. We must continue to comply with guidelines and deliver enjoyable and high quality experiences. NP thanked clubs, including Covid Officers, for their preparation, effort and support to enable hockey to be put back on.

NP referenced the financial challenges faced by England Hockey over the last few months, thanking the Board and Finance focus group for their support in the recruitment of EH's new Finance Director and the work undertaken on the coming budget year, identifying risks and reducing costs where appropriate including in relation to delivery of FIH Hockey Pro League. NP added that UK Sport and Sport England have been very supportive, confirming that two thirds of EH workforce are publicly funded and all staff have been retained during the pandemic, where necessary repurposing roles to support core business activities and enabling hockey to resume.

NP identified the business priorities including AGM Resolution, creating a more diverse and more inclusive talent pathway, IT and digital capabilities relative to the whole hockey system and commercial thinking to benefit both England Hockey and the membership. With relation to participation, a very encouraging 135k (Covid response) participation agreements have been signed indicating a strong desire to get back to playing. On the International front, GB squads return in the FIHPL with away fixtures in October and home fixtures behind closed doors in November. EH are hopeful spectators will be able to attend home fixtures in May. Work continues with BT Sport to provide coverage in front of the paywall.

NP finished by identifying that EH have had some tough months but remain committed to the strategic aims that have been identified, with a focus on increasing relevance to and building stronger relationships with the membership. NP also paid a personal tribute to Ian Wilson who retired from his role as Finance Director at the end of August 2020.

Ian Wilson began the financial report expressing his thanks for the support he has received during his time as Finance Director.

ENGLAND HOCKEY AGM 2020

Minutes



In introducing the 2019 Finance Report, IW provided context including that year on year variances are heavily influenced by the Vitality Hockey Women's World Cup in 2018, identified the opportunity and investment in 'Big Stadium Hockey' and reduction of c.£500k Sport England funding over this cycle resulting in the need to be as efficient as possible and 'do more with less'.

IW referenced the full details available in the statutory accounts, highlighting that turnover had decreased from £14.4m to £11.3m (result of VHWWC in 2018), operating deficit is down from £91k to £47k and annual deficit of -£29k. IW reinforced that England Hockey does not set out to make a deficit and in this instance, the Board considered the investment in the Big Stadium Hockey opportunity was appropriate and that EH had the financial robustness of £1.6m reserves in place. Reserves remain at £1.58m which, whilst currently below our target of having one year's Sport England grant in reserve, does provide us with some comfort.

IW finished his report identifying that cash balances had increased and debtors and creditors had both decreased, all influenced by VHWWC finances in 2018. An intangible asset of £120k has been included relating to investment in Big Stadium Hockey and IW confirmed that Irish Hockey had already utilised this technology in their Olympic Qualifiers, generating a return on the investment.

Questions were invited from the floor:

Peter Hodgson asked, 'can England Hockey confirm the geographical boundaries and exact number of teams per region that will make up the new fourth conference league. Will it be North, South, East, West or another geographical boundary?'

Whilst this will be covered in further detail in the progress update on 'A Structure Fit for the Future', Rich Beer responded, 'the new conference structure will follow the existing conference approach with geographical distribution of the best teams. The teams that win the 5 current regional premier leagues will be promoted and teams distributed accordingly.'

Howard Green asked, 'clubs are having to make substantial cost savings in order to survive in the current environment. Why, given these financial pressures, do EH consider that holding the affiliation fee flat is appropriate to our sport? Shouldn't they be looking to make substantial cost savings, reduce the financial burden imposed on clubs and contribute to the cost saving efforts at club level?'

Ian Wilson responded that as has been reported, EH are already making significant cost savings to cope with the current Covid19 situation. EH face challenges in the same way that clubs face challenges. In terms of the affiliation fee, IW has received direct feedback from clubs on how they are struggling, and confirmed that EH are aware of the need to demonstrate that it offers 'value for money' including reviewing the services offered. EH received approx. £5pp, which we believe delivers good value (comparatively Netball is £36pp and Gymnastics is c.£15-£35 depending on level) but is not to say we couldn't deliver more value. NP added that EH have been and continue to work hard on the planning and preparation required to deliver a full season. The Board felt that keeping affiliation fees at the same level was appropriate on the basis of delivering what we wish to deliver, adding value and hoping to achieve a full season.

Thalia Gallaway (Poole HC) submitted the question, 'have associations e.g. Hampshire HA had to appoint a formal Covid Officer and if not, why not?'

Nick Pink responded that the provision of Covid Officers relates to delivery of activity on the ground which for a number of counties and regions is not required. Whilst some have appointed a Covid Officer, the role is to ensure the compliance to the return to play guidelines and commitment required.

MS invited a proposer to approve the Financial Statement and Auditors Report.

Richard Sykes proposed, Paul Watts seconded. MS invited those eligible to vote to do so.

ENGLAND HOCKEY AGM 2020

Minutes



4. Approval of resolution to re-appoint Haysmacintyre as Auditors of the company and to authorise the Board to approve their remuneration.

Questions were invited from the floor:

Jeff Moores asked, 'how long have they [Haysmacintyre] stood for to date?'

MS confirmed this to be the fourth year that Haysmacintyre had been appointed and recognised the need to consider going out to tender and value for money. MS added that Haysmacintyre undertake the audit of at least 20 NGB's, have considerable expertise and provide the Board with reassurance that the audit has been done correctly, and that main areas of concern have been addressed and questioned. MS (Chair of the Audit Committee) commented on the thoroughness of the audit and contribution that they offer in relation to best practice protocol and 'benchmarking'. MS will raise with the Audit Committee in December 2020, to consider the appropriateness of going out to tender to test that EH is getting value for money.

MS invited a proposer to approve Haysmacintyre as Auditors of the company.

Neville Wrench proposed, Paul Watts seconded. MS invited those eligible to vote to do so.

6. Confirmation of the election of Angela Durnin and Simon Mantell as Membership Elected Non-Executive Directors.

MS referred to RH's comments relating to the process undertaken to nominate Angela Durnin and Simon Mantell. In the absence of any further comments, MS declared Angela Durnin and Simon Mantell duly elected as Membership Elected Non-Executive Directors.

8. Approval of the resolution to endorse the 'Structure Fit for the Future' proposal and instruct England Hockey to work with the membership with the aim to deliver the changes proposed in the timeline set out in the full proposal document.

Liz Pelling (Vice President of England Hockey and Chair of the Governance Review working group) began by referencing the three year journey of the Governance Review, first put to England Hockey by clubs in 2017, and went on to detail some of the research, consultation and roadshows that have been undertaken by the working group and England Hockey to establish the principles and answer the questions raised during the evolution of the final proposal (Dec 2019).

LP closed her introduction by reaffirming that as custodians, we have a once in a lifetime opportunity to change the governance of the sport for the future of our sport and generations to come, and reminded delegates of the democratic process and EH's responsibility for the outcome of the resolution to represent the wishes of the membership.

Rich Beer formally recoded his thanks to LP and the working group for their support and guidance over the last three years. RB referenced the changes required as a result of the Covid19 restrictions which saw the adjournment of the planned AGM in March, specifically that the Board decided at that time that work on the Governance Review that could reasonably be progressed ahead of a reconvened AGM, should be. RB continued by highlighting the revisions to the timeline, consultation with and development of specific areas i.e. adult league structure, with interim transition groups established in each of the proposed 8 areas and thanked those that have been involved in these groups at this early stage. If the resolution is passed, these groups will begin to transition themselves into shadow committees with open recruitment to positions.

RB went on to update on the national progress, specifically in reference to governance structures, where expert advice from Fulcrum Chambers has been taken on the legal status of the new areas and of a (informal) club survey that was undertaken to seek views on league structure and club preferred playing

ENGLAND HOCKEY AGM 2020

Minutes



areas. An umpiring vision has been published and work continues on the umpiring governance approach aligned to the new structure, and IT scoping has begun in relation to competition management systems. Whilst there has been a good amount of progress since March, the nature of this progress has been different as the AGM was adjourned. It is the view of EH and the transition groups that the work can still be achieved within the timeline identified and a more detailed update can be found at www.englishockey.co.uk/agmresolution.

RB closed the update identifying a number of actions that will need to be taken quickly if the resolution is passed, and highlighted the uncertainty and potential impact that Covid19 might have on the coming season. The EH Board will continue to listen to its members but feels that given where we are with the season getting underway, we should progress as planned.

Questions were invited from the floor and have been captured in appendix 1. Following the open forum, MS summarised the discussion highlighting that a lot of work has been going on in the background, for the good of Hockey, and the group have now reached a point where they need the resolution to be passed for the next stage of work to happen. If the resolution is passed, many of the questions that have been asked tonight will be able to be answered in detail. MS added that the Board are acutely aware of the current circumstances in terms of Covid19, the start of the new season and uncertainty in relation to this season. The Board will listen to concerns that are raised as we move through the season and any timelines in the proposal will be adjusted accordingly. MS reaffirmed that as yet, nothing is decided and that the vote will give the Board and working group the mandate to move ahead, or not.

MS invited a proposer to approve the resolution as outlined in the agenda.

Joe Daniel proposed, Nick Hutchinson seconded. MS invited those eligible to vote to do so.

MS finished by inviting members to continue to get in touch with EH if they have questions or queries, reinforcing that the dialogue is not over and the debate can and should be continued as we move forward.

9. Any other business (with the permission of the Chair)

No additional business was received.

MS closed the meeting by thanking members for their attendance and reminding members that the voting platform would close at 21.00 and that the result would be published on 16 September 2020.

The meeting closed at 20.45.

ENGLAND HOCKEY AGM 2020

Minutes



Results of voting on Resolutions

Mike Stoddard (Chair) demanded a poll and shortly after the close of the meeting, the voting portal closed (9pm) and Civica Election Services began their count.

Here are the results of the votes that were received on the items proposed:

Resolution	For	Against	Abstain	Result
Resolution 1: To approve the Directors & Auditors reports and audited financial statements to 31 August 2019.	1047	2	4	Resolution passed with 99.8% in favour
Resolution 2: To approve the re-appointment of Haysmacintyre as Auditors of the company and to authorise the Board to approve their remuneration.	1041	0	12	Resolution passed with 100% in favour
Resolution 4: Approval of the resolution to endorse the 'Structure Fit for the Future' proposal and instruct England Hockey to work with the membership with the aim to deliver the changes proposed in the timeline set out in the full proposal document.	894	146	13	Resolution passed with 86% in favour

Appendix 1. Item 8 – 'Structure Fit for the Future' Q+A

Alison Cook asked, "given the AGM has been delayed for 6 months, it's impossible to meet the dates in the implementation plan published. How are EH going to achieve some of those?"

Rich Beer responded that this was partially answered in the update adding that EH are confident in the work undertaken with the transition groups and the necessary changes to the timeline mean this is deliverable. Adult league structures are a priority and work has been undertaken by the transition groups in the background but without the weight of the AGM, this has not been shared publicly at risk of prejudicing this evenings vote. EH believe the work and information is there and ready to go and have identified additional work that needs to be progressed quickly in the coming weeks.

Michael Fulwood addressed the meeting detailing that RB had previously visited Bucks HA to discuss the proposal and added that clubs in the South had some misgivings about the restructure of the South leagues, primarily due to the enormity of the task and suggested that EH should pause, give this more thought and more consultation with clubs and not rush though a solution to be in place for next season. Rich Beer provided a response including referencing the work already done by the transition groups, which in the South are representative of the majority of the County Chairs and league organisers from various organisations, who have developed the first draft of the league structures. These are now being looked at in more detail by volunteers, not least in the South Central area. We will understand more about this season [in relation to the impact of Covid19] as it progresses rather than determine the outcome before we know what it will be. Developed versions of league fixtures will be shared soon for further consideration.

Jeff Moores addressed the meeting, referencing the strange times we are experiencing and stating that EH should 'go for it now', utilise the lulls we are likely to face in the playing season and that as now is the time when change is happening and uncertainty is upon us, we should 'plough ahead'.

Deborah Evelyn asked, "in the original reorganisation of areas it was emphasised that the advantage of even numbers [of feeder leagues] would make play-off easier, what's the position of the Welsh clubs

ENGLAND HOCKEY AGM 2020

Minutes



who were excluded from the scope in the proposal but in the example structure, the Welsh teams have been included?"

RB responded that at the time of publishing the proposals, we weren't in a position to include the views of Welsh clubs or Hockey Wales but we have since had correspondence with Hockey Wales and confirmation that Hockey Wales want to be able to feed into the England structures, particularly at the higher level competition. There are differences in the way their men's and women's structures interact with league structures in the North West and West which Hockey Wales will consult their clubs about if the proposal is passed. RB added that Hockey Wales are fully committed to the principles set out in the proposal.

(Edward) Mike Ward addressed the meeting commenting that the league MW represents are doubtful that the process can be completed within the period, were unaware as to what progress has been made and of the existence of transition groups until two/three weeks ago and had not been able to feed into them. MW asked "in the proposal it is stated that league positions for the new leagues for next season would be based on performance this season. What do you [EH] propose if there is no performance, i.e. no league is completed?"

RB responded that in discussion with transition groups, including one of the other regions represented, EH will adapt to the scenario presented and that there are examples that can be taken from the way restructures are done in other areas i.e. British Universities + Colleges Sport (BUCS) look back at performance trends over three years if there hasn't been a competition to compare with. Adding that there are other ways and methods if we wanted to progress at the current speed and there wasn't a season, but that the Board would continue to listen to clubs and organisations leading the change to work out what the right thing to do is in the circumstances.

Jenny Wilson commented that as a small club with a lot of young players who rely on public transport, they have concerns about the league they have been allocated to due to the travel required [in and around London] and asked whether there is any flexibility about being able to change where we are located?

RB confirmed that we have listened to and continue to want to listen to clubs on or near the 'borders' who have reasons for wanting to play in a different areas to the one proposed and suggested a follow up conversation with Steve Turner (Relationship Manager, London) to understand what would work best for the club.

Jennifer Woodyard asked what had happened to the Investec sponsorship for Women's Hockey to which Nick Pink updated that as announced in February, the 'long and fruitful relationship' had come to a natural end and highlighted the support and investment they had made over 9-10 years and changes to senior management [at Investec] leading to a shift in priorities for them.

Sue Perry, representing 4 small Sussex clubs, detailed that access to pitches is very limited at the moment, and that sourcing training facilities, additional travel and Covid19 administration is taking a toll on the 'dedicated few' that make up the volunteer workforce, and that she had received comments from them that they will end up playing in a lower league and lower quality hockey. SP added that she recognises that change is needed as the environment has changed over time [decades] but that this is not the right season to be doing this and could result in chaos, suggesting instead, allowing time for consolidation and additional analysis. SP commented that clubs need to be reassured that they won't be playing a lower standard of hockey and are going to, and have time to vote the 'right' people into new leadership roles. SP closed detailing her personal experience of reduced player availability at this time and with a plea to consider all the factors effecting grass roots hockey and put 'minds at rest' rather than push the resolution through.

MS thanked SP for her comments.

ENGLAND HOCKEY AGM 2020

Minutes



Nick Rudgard took the opportunity as a representative of one of the clubs who tabled the resolution in 2017 to thank EH for the work done to date and added that the recent Covid19 issues have concentrated the mind and that we [collectively] should seize the moment and support the resolution. MS thanked NR for his comments.

Derry Brophy reiterated the difficulties in getting across London [to fulfil fixtures] and asked whether clubs affected would be consulted?

Rich Beer confirmed that it is not a closed process and that the work that has been done in the background will be shared with, and opinions will be sought from border clubs on the structure they'd like to see. Travel around and across cities is a key consideration and if this is passed, we can go to the next stage of discussion on these issues. RB suggested contacting the relevant EH Relationship Manager.

Alastair McQuillan asked what the impact of the reorganisation would be on the delivery of their local Saturday mixed league and how the new regional bodies will fit in mixed hockey leagues that are run? RB responded that for the few mixed hockey leagues that are still run, we want to see them (and any other organisation like them that exists) align to the wider governance structure. RB reassured that we are aware of their activity and welcomed a follow up conversation.

Simon Marsh took the opportunity to reinforce previous comments recognising the work that has gone in by EH and the transitional groups so far and asked whether given the timetable, are the Board satisfied that they have enough volunteers for the transitional groups and shadow committees or are more people needed to help guide this, such as those who have asked questions this evening?

Nick Pink responded that EH want to engage with and involve as many people as possible in the process over the coming weeks, dependent on the outcome this evening. The transition groups have been in place to steer us during the challenging situation that we have faced and we recognise the need to pick up on the points made this evening and recognise that there are many people who have a part to play in this. RB added that he [EH] is aware of different levels of support of the changes proposed and that for some, it won't be something that they want to be a part of. RB expressed his hopes that others will see this as an invigorating moment to step outside of a club environment to help influence and administer a structure that is fit for the future. EH will need to look at the way we run things and will require changes in the way EH work and operate, not least in some of our governance structures, committees and the way staff operate. We will be asking for peoples help and will be recruiting openly as soon as we can move forward.

Neville Wrench referenced the Vision for Umpiring mentioned in the presentation, adding that umpires are mostly members of a 'club', an umpire's association, and asked what the plan was for umpire's associations?

RB responded that the vision sets out that the umpiring structure should be aligned to the wider governance structure in the appropriate way and are continuing to have conversations about what that looks like. Umpiring associations are both a 'club for umpires' and also provide a service to the game through appointments and other services. Additional work is required to 'unpick' where they are a 'club' and where they are a service provider to the game and the timeline has been adjusted to allow for further debate.

Brian Linfield reinforced that umpiring will be affected in a major way but that his organisation (Lancashire HUA) had not been made aware of the transition groups prior to this meeting and asked why it had not been communicated to the HUA's?

Whilst RB could not answer for BL's specific circumstances, he detailed that the North management group and North Committee had endorsed and approved the transition groups that had been established in both the North East and North West. BL followed up that LHUA will cease to exist, has a major membership and yet has not been included in the area within which it will be absorbed. RB responded that the initial transition groups are smaller and not yet formal but that if the resolution is passed, they

ENGLAND HOCKEY AGM 2020

Minutes



will move to become more formal groups representing the bodies involved. RB will follow up with North HUA and NWHUA to find out what work has been done.

Alison Cook queried firstly, that Liz Pelling had referred to this as a 'once in a lifetime opportunity' but that EH are trying to condense it into a 6 month period and suggested that more time be taken to ensure it is done right, and secondly, that neither the men's nor ladies league committees in the West had been approached to participate in any discussions regarding transition.

Liz Pelling responded to the first point that this process has been underway for three years with a lot of consultation, listening and tweaked and whilst Covid19 has brought us to a condensed end, it has not been rushed into. The proposal and structural changes were reached as a result of that consultation, the last 6 months have not been wasted and we're confident that we're in a good position to take it forward. RB suggested that the second point be picked up from a West perspective if we move forward from this point adding that a finite amount of consultation could be undertaken during the 'limbo' period we've been in without undermining the process and that transition plans would be shared.

MS summarised the discussion as detailed in the meeting minutes.

**NB – questions and responses are not recorded verbatim and have been condensed where appropriate. The essence of the question remains as intended and the full version is available in the recording of the AGM.*