



# A Structure Fit for the Future

Recommendations for the 2020 AGM  
Updated December 2019



ENGLAND  
HOCKEY

# Contents

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<b>1. Welcome from Liz Pelling .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. The initial proposal from June 2019 .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>4. Feedback on the initial proposal .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>5. Changes and additions to proposal.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>6. Functional areas .....</b>	<b>33</b>
a. Governance / Overarching elements	
i. Area Governance	
ii. Sub Area governance / approach	
iii. Financial models	
iv. Area boundaries	
v. Technology	
vi. Volunteer retention, recruitment and training	
vii. Risk management	
viii. Timeline for change	
b. Functional Areas	
i. Adult Leagues and Competitions	
1. Detailed League Structures	
2. League Rules	
3. Timeline for change	
ii. Junior Competitions	
1. Principles	
2. Timeline for change	
iii. Umpiring	
iv. Discipline	
v. Masters	
vi. Player Pathway	
<b>7. Governance and overarching elements .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>8. Timeline for change .....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>9. Future proofing.....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>10. Outside of scope .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>11. The AGM .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Appendix 1.....</b>	<b>67</b>

# Welcome



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# Welcome from Liz Pelling

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I'm delighted to be able to share this proposal – A Structure Fit for the Future – with the membership for consideration at the 2020 England Hockey AGM. Since we shared the initial governance proposals in the summer, we have received a lot of feedback from individuals and organisations via the various roadshows, meetings and consultations we have undertaken.

I really appreciate the time people have put in so far to help us, and we respect the views given, whether in favour or otherwise. Together with the rest of the working group, we feel a great responsibility to get this right and we now feel we can share a proposal that will systematically improve the structure of the sport for years to come.



We have reflected on some of the timings and detail in the proposal in response to the feedback from the membership survey conducted in October. It's clear that there is an appetite for change, particularly amongst clubs, and that many of the recommendations in the initial proposal would be well received.

Obviously, no change this significant is without risk. Therefore, the detailed steps required in the changes have been worked through with much more detail provided in this next stage of the proposal. We believe this will answer the majority of issues that were raised in the feedback and definitely most of those that clubs were seeking clarity upon.

It is important to recognise that the 2020 England Hockey AGM doesn't mark the end of the process of consultation and refinement of the proposals. It is the formal commitment required to take the next steps, after which there will be more detail developed in consultation with clubs and the proposed new organisational structures. The steps after the AGM are outlined in the proposal.

We are a proud, progressive sport, that has always looked to balance our traditions with the desire to improve and innovate. This is a once in a generation opportunity to take a step forward and address the complexity of our current structures to make lives easier for the volunteers of the future.

The initial request to review came from the membership and it will go back to the membership at the 2020 AGM to decide. I hope that you can support our recommendations, and please cast your vote!

**Liz Pelling**

Member Elected Vice President of England Hockey

# Executive Summary



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## 2. Executive Summary

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This proposal sets out a plan to modernise, streamline and improve the administration of hockey for the benefit of players, clubs and the organising bodies. It presents a once in a generation opportunity to systematically improve the sport aligning our collective efforts more effectively.

### Why are we doing this?

In 2017 a resolution was put by clubs to the England Hockey AGM, and strongly supported by the membership, to review the way the sport was structured locally. Since 2017 England Hockey has been consulting widely and developing a proposal. This consultation process and the steps taken along the way are all available here: [www.englishockey.co.uk/agmresolution](http://www.englishockey.co.uk/agmresolution)

The proposals are underpinned by a vision and set of good governance principles that have been key to decision making throughout the process.

### VISION

A robust governance structure that allows for maximum participation in hockey within a safe environment underpinned by an organisational structure that ensures consistency, accountability, transparency and communication at all levels.

### PRINCIPLES

Seven overarching principles of future good governance in hockey were established by the Working Group. These principles are derived directly from the results of the consultation process. They are as follows:

1. As National Governing Body, England Hockey has overall responsibility for the sport in England
2. There is a fundamental role for local organisation and decision making
3. Clarification of accountability of all organising bodies to their stakeholders and ultimately to England Hockey is required
4. Simplification of structure should be the aim to make it easier for all involved
5. Clarity of purpose is key for all organising bodies
6. Common principles of governance are necessary for all organising bodies
7. Consistency of overarching policies, rules and regulations is required for all aspects relating to playing hockey\*

\* Umpiring, officiating and coaching are included in the scope of the AGM Resolution and are included within the term 'playing'. Rules and some regulations subject to FIH



## What will change?

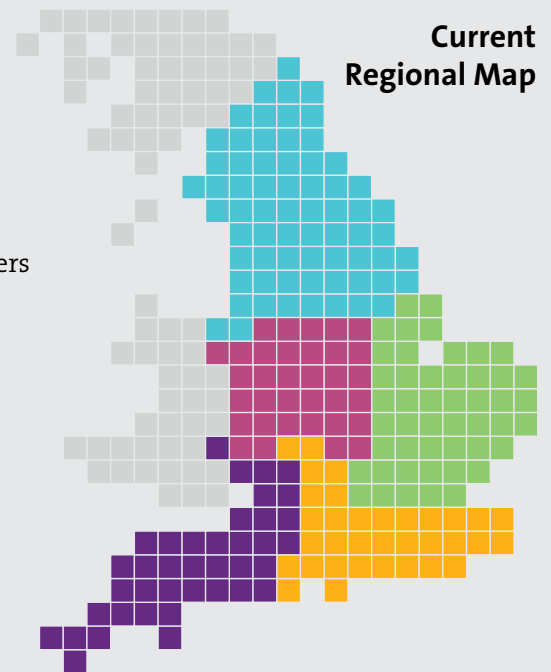
### *From this... in 2019*

#### **A structure with:**

- Multiple organisations that are not well understood.
- Lack of consistency and clarity of purpose
- Duplication and inefficiencies in approach that creates extra work in clubs
- Variable governance standards
- Some organisations not directly accountable to their membership or wider governance structures
- Inequality in opportunities to progress.

#### **What we have now:**

- Five Regions of significantly different sizes (largest has nearly 3 times as many players than smallest)
- Over 100 organising bodies including regions, counties, umpiring bodies and leagues (adult and junior)
- 40 sets of league rules



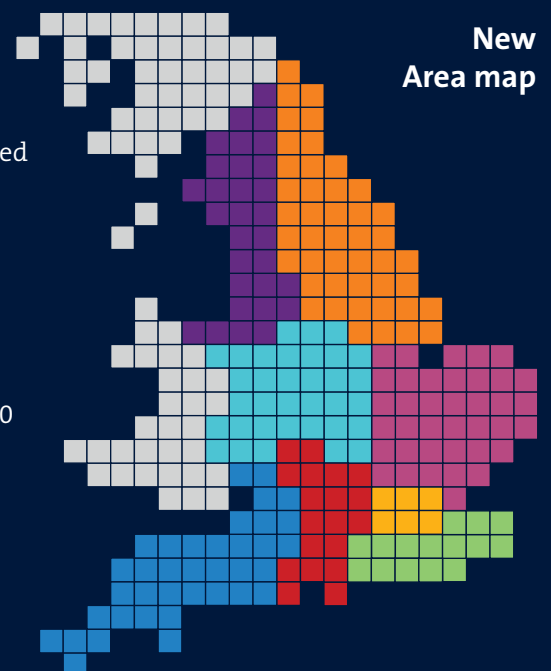
### *To this... from 2021*

#### **A structure with:**

- Clear purpose and leadership
- Fewer bodies to achieve economies of scale & efficiencies
- Local accountability to members and aligned National structure
- Consistency in both approach and governance expectations
- More equal opportunities to progress through competitions and leagues.

#### **What it will look like:**

- Eight, more equal, areas based on density of teams and travel times.
- Sub-Areas with narrower purpose. In most, but not all, cases these will be counties.
- A leaner system with c50 fewer organisations and c100 fewer committees
- One common framework of league rules



The proposal recommends that the structure of the sport is changed with eight equally competitive 'Areas' around the country created (from the current five) that will be part of an aligned approach nationally. These areas have been created by using participation and travel data to aim to create a more optimised approach to delivering hockey and a fairer structure in terms of opportunity to progress.

Adult leagues and competitions will be led by the eight Areas to a common rules framework across genders and areas which will help to make the lives of administrators, from both clubs and associations, easier across the sport. To help understand the specific implications for your organisation, a detailed adult league outline structure

has been created and is available to review as well as more detail on the implications for other areas of hockey structure. You can find this here: [www.englandhockey.co.uk/astructurefitforthefuture](http://www.englandhockey.co.uk/astructurefitforthefuture)

Junior competition provision is currently patchier across the country than for adults and the local implications will vary. Mostly the changes will bring more consistency of structure and alignment based on the good practice that is available already. A framework is provided through this proposal for junior competition that allows for the necessary local flexibility according to demand with festival, central-venue and home and away provision within the framework.

Over time, currently independent umpiring organisations will evolve to align to a clearer national structure including consolidation in terms of the number of bodies to reduce and align to the eight new Areas. Retaining local umpiring support is critical through this process and a managed transition, linked to a clearer national approach, will evolve over the next 2-3 seasons.

The majority of umpiring appointments (over 80%) are made by clubs, who will benefit from more consistent league rules meaning the right umpires can be used on the right games wherever possible. This is particularly important as clubs try to balance allowing players to umpire as well as play.

Masters hockey player numbers are increasing and the structure proposed will aim to evolve alongside the growing interest in this format of the game. Similarly to junior hockey, the examples of good practice vary across the country and there is much that can be gained through more sharing and alignment in approach. Representative Masters hockey at Area level is currently strong. Whilst the increase in the number of Areas to eight from the five current Regions will take some time to embed, the growing number of players and balance across the country gives confidence that in time, this will continue to strengthen.

The improved governance structure, which will reduce the amount of disconnection and duplication in the administration of the sport, will lead to the ability to more systematically improve communication and the use of technology. England Hockey recognises the need to invest in the use of technology.

If you are uncertain or unclear about any of the implications, please email [agm.resolution@englandhockey.co.uk](mailto:agm.resolution@englandhockey.co.uk).

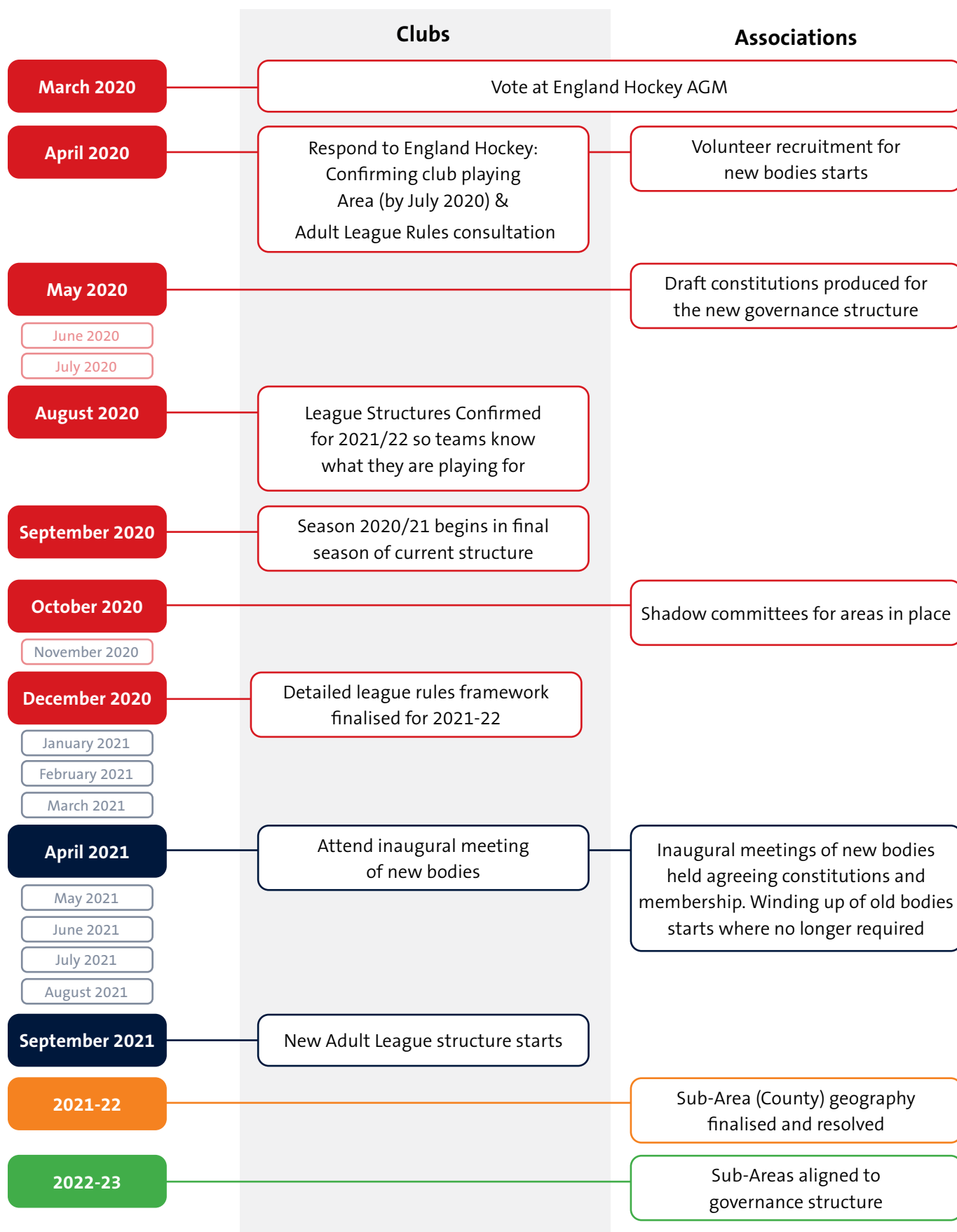
## **Why is it a good thing?**

- A fairer structure for clubs and participants to progress within competitions and league structures
- Common league rules across the genders and the areas
- Improved junior competition structures
- Less travel for many clubs and players
- Common structures and approaches will make administration easier for clubs and associations
- A leaner more accountable structure that will be easier to improve in future aligned to clubs' wishes
- More alignment provides greater opportunity to systematically improve technology provision



## What will happen if approved?

Depending on the nature of the organisation the steps for change will vary.



## How do I vote?

All member bodies of England Hockey – namely clubs and member associations – will be able to vote on the proposals at the 2020 England Hockey AGM on 17th March. In early February 2020 voting instructions will be sent to England Hockey key contacts in each organisation along with the resolution and instructions on how to vote.

If you have any questions related to your organisations voting rights, please email [agm.resolution@englandhockey.co.uk](mailto:agm.resolution@englandhockey.co.uk)



# The initial proposal from June 2019



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## 2. Introduction

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At the 2017 England Hockey AGM a number of clubs put a resolution to the membership requesting that England Hockey review the way the sport is structured. This was resoundingly passed by the membership and an England Hockey Board sponsored Working Group was set up to oversee the review. This document sets out the recommendations of the Working Group that follow a period of detailed consultation with members.

### **The 2017 AGM Resolution:**

‘This resolution proposes that England Hockey review the sport’s current governance structure across the country so that it provides the best opportunity to develop the sport; increasing participation levels and the chances of sustained success at a national and international level while safeguarding participants and giving members the best possible experience in the 21st Century’

After significant consultation and consideration it has become clear that there is a strong appetite from clubs and many associations to modernise aspects of the sport to make administration easier, reduce duplication and complexity and to ensure that structures are fit for purpose for years to come.

There are currently many organisational structures in hockey with wide-ranging differences in approach to governance, regulations and geography. These have grown organically and whilst the current structure is roughly aligned to the five Regions and forty-five Counties there are many anomalies and differences that make it confusing for clubs and players to understand.

The Working Group first laid out a set of ‘principles and requirements’ that would direct the review. The principles were then consulted on and agreed in November 2018 and are set out later in this document. These were then used to consider the structure of the sport and where improvements could be made. A set of ‘quick wins’ were also agreed and progressed.

The Working Group and Board of England Hockey are proposing a rationalisation and restructuring of the sport to take place over the coming years.





The proposal recommends that two tiers of local governance of hockey in England are retained but with clarification and consistency to the way the sport is organised. All organisational bodies (e.g. Leagues, Hockey Umpires Associations) would align to this new governance structure. There will be significant consolidation of activity to the Area level.

*Figure 1: Proposed split of responsibilities*

Area	Local Sub-Area
<b>Responsibilities:</b> Adult Leagues & Competitions Junior Leagues & Competitions Performance Centres Discipline Officiating Appointments Masters Representative teams	<b>Responsibilities:</b> Representative teams: (where demand exists) • Masters • Adult • Junior: Academy Centres & Development Centres

It is intended that this approach will significantly reduce the number of bodies and committees in the sport (c100 fewer organisational committees and/or bodies) which will provide economies of scale and greater consistency. Area geography will be agreed nationally based on the distribution of clubs and players. Local Sub-Area geography will be agreed by Areas based on demand – in many areas it will be logical to retain county areas but in some there may be a need to merge or split traditional county areas.

Alongside the structural review are a set of recommendations that the new structure will be tasked to deliver to improve the experience for clubs and participants. These specifics will be set out in an implementation plan.

## 3. The Working Group

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A Working Group to drive this initiative forward was established shortly after the AGM, comprising the following key individuals:

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| • <b>Chair</b> - Liz Pelling (England Hockey Vice President – elected by members) | • <b>Region’s Consultative Committee (RCC)</b> - Neville Wrench (nominated by the RCC)   | • <b>Independent</b> - Christine Fisher – CEO of North-West Leicestershire Council   |
| • <b>Board Member</b> - Richard Sykes (Independent Non-Executive Director)        | • <b>England Hockey Executive Directors</b> - Rich Beer (Development Director); Ian Wilson (Finance and Administration Director) | • <b>Head of Governance</b> - Jennifer Agnew (joined the Working Group in June 2018) |

## 4. Approach

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The Working Group set out the following approach and timeline at the start of the project. Given the scope, extent and complexity of this project the original timeline has been adjusted to make room for further consultation.

*Figure 2: Original review timeline from April 2017*

### 1. Scope & Research

**May 2017** – England Hockey Board agrees the outline approach and timeline.

**Jun 2017** – Project Board set up to determine exact scope of work and project plan.

**Sep 2017** – England Hockey Board agrees scope of work and consultation process.

**Sep 2017** – Research phase begins with stakeholder groups.

### 2. Principles

**Jan 2018** – England Hockey Board discusses and agrees the principles.

**Mar 2018** – agreed principles taken to England Hockey AGM.

### 4. Structure

**Apr 2018** – Working Group considers structural implications of principles.

**Jun 2018** – Consultation starts with organisations that might be affected by changes and timelines agreed to implement changes.

### 5. Implementation

**Mar 2019** – Implementation plan taken to March 2019 England Hockey AGM.

**Apr 2019** – Implementation begins (to agreed timelines).

The Working Group also confirmed the scope of the review and determined that ‘Wednesday’ University Hockey (governed by British Universities and Colleges Sport) and schools hockey were both excluded to make the scope manageable. They decided to focus on organisations covered by England Hockey’s Memorandum and Articles. Once the initial proposals are considered the status of school hockey within the new structure will be reviewed.

The governance of England Hockey is also excluded as this is set out in the Company’s Articles and is subject to the decisions of its members in general meetings. Sport England and UK Sport review the governance of all national sporting bodies in receipt of public funds.





## 5. Research Phase

The AGM Resolution Working Group commissioned an independent consultancy 'Yew Consulting' to undertake research within the sport on the current issues faced by clubs and associations. The following extract is taken from the independent consultant's report:

*The research and consultation took place between September and December 2017 and considered the current governance of hockey by Regional Associations, County Associations, Umpiring Associations and Leagues (collectively called governance bodies throughout this report) and whether these meet the needs of clubs and players. It does not include club level governance or national (England Hockey) level. England Hockey has recently gone through its own governance review against the requirements of the UK Sport/Sport England Code for Sports Governance.*

*The process involved desk research about governance within hockey and other sports and consultation with club administrators, players and members as well as representatives of the governance bodies through two different online surveys; and representatives of clubs and governance bodies through consultation meetings, one in each of the five existing regions.*

*To maximise input to the consultation process the survey and consultation meeting was actively promoted on England Hockey's website and social media platforms, by England Hockey regional staff and cascaded via regional and county governance bodies.*

*490 responses were received to the club survey*

*from just under a third (31%) of all hockey clubs. Half (53%) of all survey respondents were club administrators/committee members and 30% were playing club members with the remainder non-playing club members, umpires/technical officials, coaches and parents.*

*More men than women responded to the survey and young people were underrepresented in the survey responses, with only 17% of respondents aged 30 or under.*

*113 responses were received to the governance bodies survey from administrators in all 5 regions, half of counties and umpire associations and 17% of known adult leagues. The consultation meetings were attended by 75 people who were a mix of club and governance body representatives.*

### Findings

*The governance of hockey is not currently in crisis. Multiple playing opportunities every week are supported by the current governance bodies and by thousands of committed volunteers.*

*There are differences in view on the effectiveness of the current governance bodies and the impact*

*of their decisions and actions on clubs and players. However, there is clear evidence of inconsistencies in governance across the sport and a need to strengthen governance leadership. The research and consultation have identified several governance issues needing to be addressed and opportunities that could be taken that would have a positive impact on players and administrators, reduce dissatisfaction and help hockey to grow.*

*Out of the five key elements that contribute to good governance referenced in the review three in particular emerged as the areas in need of greatest improvement:*

- *Structure*
- *People*
- *Communications and transparency.*

*(Policies/Procedures and Standards/Conduct were deemed to be lower priority)*

*The consultation process reinforced the point that hockey's governance bodies are autonomous bodies and, whilst England Hockey has some influence, it is not able to 'tell' the governance bodies what to do. However, among a majority of people who*

*participated in the consultation process there is recognition of the need for some or significant improvement in governance. Furthermore, There is evidence that a number of individuals and governance bodies across hockey are willing to work to make that happen with England Hockey's leadership and support. If improvements are to be implemented an open and consultative process should be followed, ideally volunteer driven with professional support, and with widespread engagement from across the sport.*

*If some of the concerns and issues identified are not addressed then it is likely that the governance of hockey will diminish in effectiveness over time as volunteering levels reduce and uncertainty around the purpose of bodies results in decline, to the detriment of the sport.*

*As outlined in the introduction the role of England Hockey is outside of the scope of this report. However as the National Governing Body, its role in the leadership of governance and its relationship with the volunteer-led governance bodies is critical. As the review Working Group decides on the actions to take following this report, it will be important that this is also considered.*





## 6. Vision, Principles and Requirements

From the research, the AGM Resolution Working Group developed a Vision, Principles and Requirements for the Review. These were shared for consultation, refined and agreed at the November 2018 England Hockey Board meeting.

*Figure 3: Agreed Vision and Principles*

### VISION

A robust governance structure that allows for maximum participation in hockey within a safe environment underpinned by an organisational structure that ensures consistency, accountability, transparency and communication at all levels.

### PRINCIPLES

Seven overarching principles of future good governance in hockey were established by the Working Group. These principles are derived directly from the results of the consultation process. They are as follows:

- 1 As National Governing Body, England Hockey has overall responsibility for the sport in England
- 2 There is a fundamental role for local organisation and decision making
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- 4 Simplification of structure should be the aim to make it easier for all involved
- 5 Clarity of purpose is key for all organising bodies
- 6 Common principles of governance are necessary for all organising bodies
- 7 Consistency of overarching policies, rules and regulations is required for all aspects relating to playing hockey\*  
*\* Umpiring, officiating and coaching are included in the scope of the AGM Resolution and are included within the term 'playing'. Rules and some regulations subject to FIH*



## 7. Impact of the AGM Resolution

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Given the time taken developing an evidence-based and consultative approach to structural change the AGM Resolution Working Group has sought a number of 'quick wins'. Progress with these is outlined on the AGM Resolution 'Governance Review 2018' page of the website, [www.englandhockey.co.uk/agmresolution](http://www.englandhockey.co.uk/agmresolution), as part of the updates on progress of the review.

Beyond the 'quick wins', the Working Group has identified that to effectively resolve many of the issues identified by members, a more substantial structural review is required. The reasons for this became clear during the research phase and subsequently as the 'Vision, Principles and Requirements' were considered in more detail.

A function-based approach was taken to help the Working Group, the England Hockey Board and the Region's Consultative Committee consider what options were available. These were then narrowed down to those contained in this proposal. Before determining the proposed approach the functions that need to be delivered by any structure in the sport were identified. These are not exhaustive but are agreed to cover the majority of activities.

Activities outside of the scope already referenced (individual club governance, schools and Wednesday university activity) were excluded along with activities not delivered through local structures. This review therefore focuses on:

- Adult Leagues and competitions
- Junior Leagues and competitions
- Other Competitions (Tiered Championships, Indoor etc.)
- Masters
- Discipline
- Player Pathway
- Umpiring & Officiating
- Adult Representative Teams (currently County Championships)
- Affiliation
- Policy & Governance



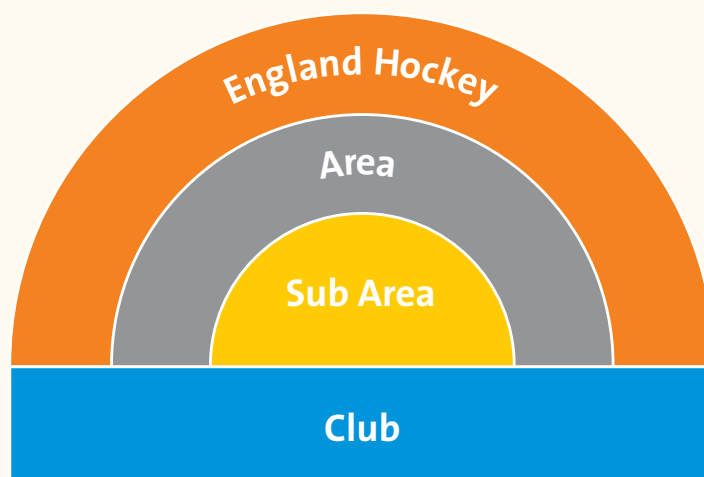
## 8. Structural Change Proposed

The proposal aims to follow the principles already set out and agreed through previous stages of the consultation (see section 6). The focus is on a clearer, simpler structure that creates a more efficient and effective approach whilst retaining (and in some cases improving) local influence for clubs in decision making and creating a more consistent approach.

A two-tier structure in England would be maintained but the number of committees and organisations would be reduced by ensuring that responsibility for delivery of functions is primarily at just one level and not duplicated. All bodies would be expected to fall in line with this new structure that will provide greater simplicity and efficiency for all parties, particularly clubs.

Rather than the traditional 'hierarchical' model, this would be an accountable, functional approach where clubs would be voting members of all the bodies that provide services to them. Communication would be required between all organisations but the terms of interaction would be clearer as functions would be consistent between bodies. The number of separate bodies/organisations in hockey would be reduced by approximately 50%.

Figure 4: Proposed functional model:



Area	Sub Area	England Hockey
Adult Leagues & Competitions	Player Pathway Activity (Development Centre and Academy Centre)	Policies and procedures for the sport
Junior Leagues & Competitions	Adult Representative Teams (inc Masters)	Coach development and education
Player Pathway (Performance Centres)		Umpiring Courses (Level One)
Discipline		Safeguarding
Umpiring and Technical Officials		Facilities Support and Advice
Masters Representative Teams		EH competitions

## How each function will change

**Adult Leagues (& Competitions)** – these currently operate at a number of levels: National, Regional, Sub Regional and County. The structural change proposed is to organise all of these at two levels: National level (those run by England Hockey as currently) and Area level. The leagues would also be run jointly for Men's and Women's leagues with consistency between the genders to provide more consistency for clubs that are mostly now joint gender clubs. Although administered at Area level their pyramid would run down to a more local level as required.

**Junior Leagues (& Competitions)** – the structure for junior leagues is currently inconsistent with great strength of organisation in some areas and gaps in others. In the proposal the leadership of junior competition will exist at Area level with elements of local delegation of responsibility where appropriate. Structures would be designed to ensure travel for young people is proportionate to playing standard. This should help create more layers of competition for young people of all abilities to cater for the growth in junior club hockey. Local England Hockey competition rounds would be aligned to this to ease calendaring challenges.

**Masters** – Masters Leagues and Competitions would be organised at Area level and Masters Representative teams aligned to these areas for both genders. Sub-Areas would also continue to run Masters Representative teams as exist in some of the current regions.

**Discipline** – Discipline would become a function of the Area reducing the number of Association Discipline Officers significantly (c40 fewer roles), creating more consistency in approach and efficiency in processes. Areas may require a discipline sub-group to support the Area Discipline Officer.

**Player Pathway** – The Player Pathway was set up in 2005 (as the Single System) and is overseen by a joint committee of the current Regions with England Hockey. It was reviewed in 2013 and will continue to be reviewed periodically. The current Player Pathway structure would be aligned to the new structure with Sub-Areas having responsibility for Development Centres and Academy Centres and the Area having responsibility for the Performance Centres.

**Umpiring and Officiating** – The number of HUA's would reduce to align to the Area structure pooling the resources of current HUA's and making the umpiring pathway more seamless. Technical Officiating would align to the same structure.

**Adult Representative Teams** – would continue to exist organised at Local Sub-Area Level as a direct entry competition as long as demand exists (currently the Adult County Championships).

**Policy and Governance** – any functional body will have more clearly defined expectations in terms of appropriate policy and governance, including aspects such as safeguarding, health & safety and finance responsibilities. These are covered in 'Good Governance' in section 10. Affiliation is included within this and is expected to be streamlined to be more efficient for administrators.





## From Five Regions to Eight Areas

There are currently five Regions in England that are established on a multi-county structure. The five Regions are uneven in size as the table beneath demonstrates. They have also developed very different internal structures and approaches that has resulted in significant inconsistency.

Figure 5: Map of the current Regions

**Currently:**



Figure 6: Distribution of clubs, teams and players in the current regions

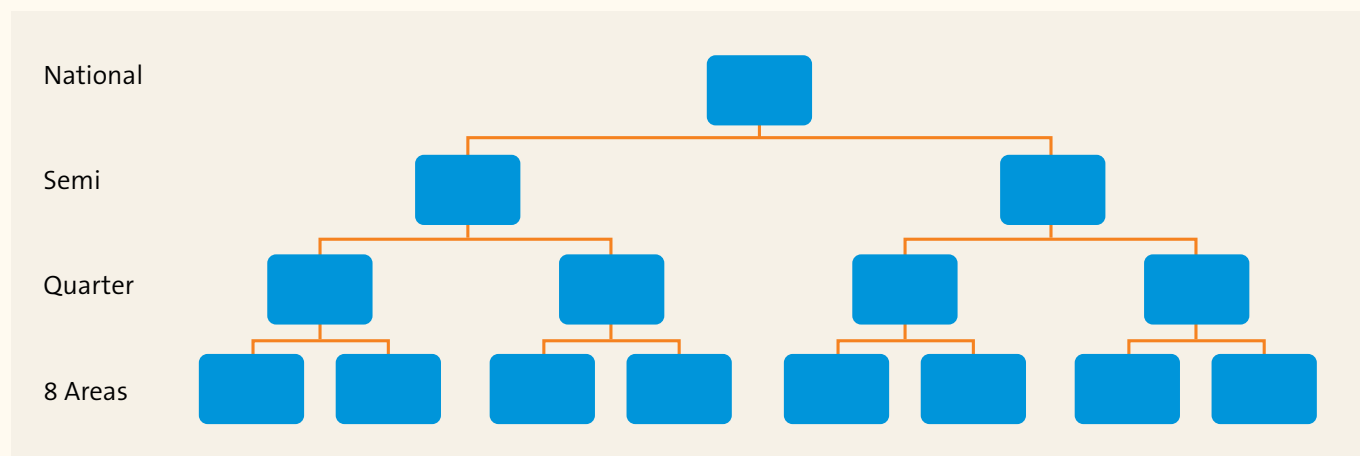
Region	Clubs	Adult League Teams	Players aged 16 and under	Players aged 17+
East	104	17%	16%	17%
Midlands	130	17%	13%	16%
North	176	21%	18%	21%
South	181	31%	38%	32%
West	127	14%	15%	14%

Having five Regions creates many challenges for the later stages of competitions as complicated competition structures are required to progress from five Regions to finals.

**Proposed:**

It is proposed therefore to move to eight new, similar sized Areas structured in a way that aligns to modern travel networks and creates easier to manage competition structures. This realignment will ensure that opportunities are more equal for clubs and teams to progress.

Figure 7: A more logical competition structure



To generate the new Areas, England Hockey has worked with market leading operational logistics company Llamasoft ([www.llamasoft.com](http://www.llamasoft.com)). Every affiliated club has been mapped and the playing level of teams mapped and modelled to create an optimised structure. This has taken into account travel times by road at weekends and taken into account public transport considerations (in London in particular).

Having mapped the distribution of clubs and teams, and considered the number of players at adult and junior levels, the following structure is proposed for the new Areas that creates considerably more consistency.

Clubs on the boundary lines in the map would be invited to consider which Area to join but will be expected to join only one Area fully for both male and female hockey. It is intended to then sub divide the 8 Areas into smaller feeder leagues to split the country into 16 and 32.

Figure 8: Proposed new areas



Figure 9: Distribution of clubs, teams and players in proposed new structure

Region	Clubs	Adult League Teams	U16	17+
South Central	71	12%	13%	12%
East	75	12%	11%	11%
Greater London	73	14%	16%	15%
Midlands	130	17%	13%	16%
North East	98	11%	10%	12%
North West	85	10%	9%	10%
South East	66	11%	13%	11%
South West	120	13%	14%	13%

Area responsibility will broaden and deepen with the following functions existing at Area Level.

- Adult Leagues (& Competitions)
- Junior Leagues (& Competitions)
- Discipline
- Player Pathway
- Umpiring & Technical Officials
- Masters
- Policy and governance

Each Area would be a voting member of England Hockey but separately constituted with purpose and objectives aligned with other Areas. All Areas would share common core constitutions where clubs would be voting members, potentially following the same model as the England Hockey structure with proportionate votes for clubs based on their size.



Each Area would be expected to follow the best practice principles of Good Governance that will be developed by England Hockey and agreed by the new Area bodies.

The economies of scale in this approach would allow for some roles to be delivered by a mix of volunteers and part-time contractors where the administrative load is more significant (as is common in the Player Pathway, some leagues and clubs). A financial model for Areas will be developed in due course.

## Leagues

Leagues would be realigned so that they fit the new eight Area structure. Leagues would have consistent rules and would be regulated by their Area. They would meet nationally with England Hockey to agree a common framework of rules and regulations.



## **Relationship between the Areas and England Hockey**

The eight Areas would meet with England Hockey to determine the approach to delivering the functions. As far as possible, each Area should deliver the functions in the same way ensuring consistency for clubs across the country. Each functional lead would meet with the other Area functional leads using modern approaches to meeting management (video/conference calls). The eight Area chairs (or selected representatives) would meet regularly with England Hockey as a group to ensure effective collaborative decision making in the delivery of hockey.

### **The Local Sub-Area role will be streamlined**

Local Sub-Areas will be defined by local geography and density of hockey participation. In many cases, but not always, this will be a county.

Local Sub-Area roles are currently extremely variable with some delivering a relatively large programme and others little beyond the Player Pathway and some younger junior competitions.

In the proposed approach Local Sub-Areas would exist for representative hockey – e.g. Player Pathway or Masters teams (and adult representative teams where they still exist). All other functions would be passed to the Area level.

It is expected that Local Sub-Area structures would become considerably leaner with a clear purpose.

The smallest counties may wish to consider sharing/pooling resources with neighbouring counties where appropriate to form appropriately sized Local Sub-Areas.

Local Sub-Areas would hold a seat on the relevant Area Functional committees. Adult Representative (County) teams are now a direct entry competition to England Hockey and therefore there is not an Area function for this.

# Summary of Proposed Changes

## *From this... in 2019*

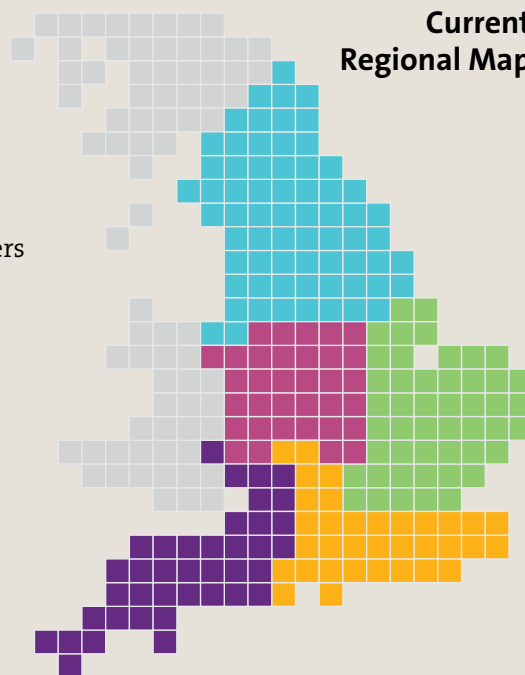
### **A structure with:**

- Multiple organisations that are not well understood.
- Lack of consistency and clarity of purpose
- Duplication and inefficiencies in approach that creates extra work in clubs
- Variable governance standards
- Some organisations not directly accountable to their membership or wider governance structures
- Inequality in opportunities to progress.

### **What we have now:**

- Five Regions of significantly different sizes (largest has nearly 3 times as many players than smallest)
- Over 100 organising bodies including regions, counties, umpiring bodies and leagues (adult and junior)
- 40 sets of league rules

**Current  
Regional Map**



## *To this... in 2021*

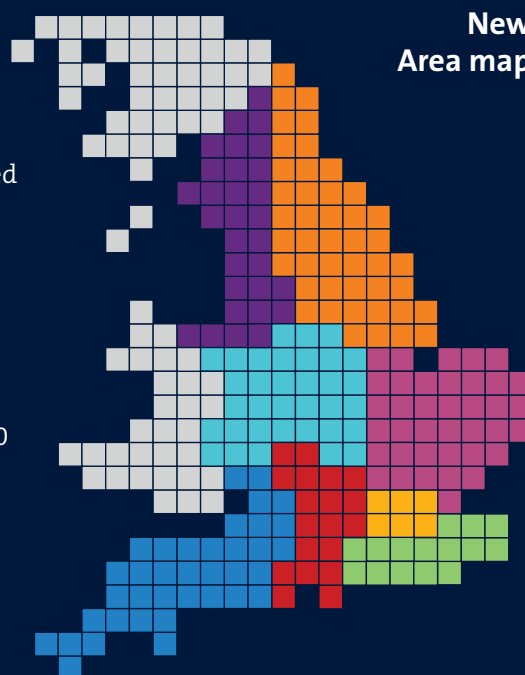
### **A structure with:**

- Clear purpose and leadership
- Fewer bodies to achieve economies of scale & efficiencies
- Local accountability to members and aligned National structure
- Consistency in both approach and governance expectations
- More equal opportunities to progress through competitions and leagues.

### **What it will look like:**

- Eight more equal Areas based on density of teams and travel times.
- Sub-Areas with narrower purpose. In most, but not all, cases these will be counties.
- A leaner system with c50 fewer organisations and c100 fewer committees
- One common framework of league rules

**New  
Area map**



### **Benefits for Clubs:**

- More simplified system with fewer bodies to deal with.
- More opportunities for teams and clubs to succeed.
- Clearer junior competition structure.
- Common rules and regulations across genders = More consistency with less administration.
- Clubs become voting members of all bodies.

### **Benefits for Associations:**

- More economies of scale.
- Fewer connections to be made between organisations.
- Better potential to create some paid administrative roles if desired.
- Clearer approach to engagement with England Hockey and clubs.



## 9. Delivery Specifics

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The research and consultation has also identified a strong desire for more consistency in approach in administration throughout the game from clubs and participants. Subject to the proposals being accepted and structural changes implemented a number of actions would be implemented over the following seasons to include the following:

### Game Format Regulation

The playing formats, particularly for young people, would be set and agreed nationally to ensure greater consistency of experience for young players entering the game. This would include playing formats (e.g. 7-a-side) as well as guidance around match and tournament regulations. This is now common practice in other team sports.

### Calendar

The National Calendar set by England Hockey would become a requirement to be followed at all levels and organisational planning of all activity would align to this calendar.

### Joint Gender Delivery

A large number of aspects of hockey are now delivered through joint gender committees. This creates efficiencies and consistency for participants and particularly club administrators. Each functional Area would be delivered for both genders.

### Affiliation

A common process for affiliation will exist aligned to the England Hockey affiliation process with all fees rolled into one payment for Areas and Sub-Areas. These would be collected via the England Hockey system and redirected to the relevant body. Entry fees for competitions and leagues would remain separate initially.





## Technology

Technology improvements are critical across the delivery of the sport. It was a strong feature of the feedback from members. There are considerable strengths in some areas but also inconsistencies and a lack of alignment overall. A whole sport digital approach would be agreed with a clear implementation plan. The aims of this approach would be to improve the experience for club administrators, remove duplicated effort and provide efficiencies for competition and activity organisers.

Specifically the objective would be to reduce duplication for club administrators and provide integrated IT approaches wherever possible.

## Player Registration

All players will be expected to be registered on a single database with England Hockey and their relevant bodies. This would be to support both the ease of IT systems and to ensure that there is appropriate visibility for robust discipline and health and safety standards. By entering details once and appropriate sharing of data this would ease administration processes. Partnerships would be made with club administration systems to make this process as seamless as possible.

## Rules & Regulations

League rules (excluding rules of the game that are decided by the FIH) and regulations would be aligned to a common framework which would adapt appropriately to the level of hockey being played. These would be regularly reviewed and changes agreed collectively by the eight Areas (with England Hockey) rather than individually through local bodies as currently. The objectives would be to make it easy to play at lower levels with the game appropriately regulated through the higher levels.

## Transparency

All the bodies in the sport would have to meet standards in line with the Tenants of Good Governance (section 10). This would include clear transparency for members of decision making, accounts and election processes.



# Feedback on the initial proposal



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## 4. Feedback on the initial proposal

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After developing the proposals from earlier member feedback, England Hockey led a series of roadshows from July through to November sharing the plans and inviting comment and discussion on the proposals.

Total attendance at EH meetings discussing the proposal	364
Clubs represented	180
Regional / County HAs represented	30
HUAs represented	28
Leagues and other bodies represented	15

From the feedback at the roadshows a set of Frequently Asked Questions was developed to provide additional information. These are available from [www.englandhockey.co.uk/agmresolution](http://www.englandhockey.co.uk/agmresolution)

An online survey was also made available to capture feedback on the proposals from members, the full results of which are available from [www.englandhockey.co.uk/agmresolution](http://www.englandhockey.co.uk/agmresolution). In addition to the research, a small number of letters were received from organisations with specific feedback largely relating to their own circumstances – these have been incorporated into the feedback for consideration. A summary of the research is as follows.

There was a good but not excellent number of responses to the survey. The open text responses extended to c2000 comments and 65,000 words of feedback from respondents on the proposals from a range of perspectives.

Based on the spread of respondents and the quantity, the results can be considered to represent a fair spectrum of views of the proposals across England. Comparing attendance at the roadshows and the survey it is clear that there are many clubs (perhaps as much as 50%) who still have, at best, a passive interest in the proposals or, at worst, a lack of awareness of the proposals. In a few cases there are also some fundamental misunderstandings that need clarification through further stages of the process.

**The surveys indicated strong support for the following aspects of the proposal:**

- Simplified structures – clubs, in particular, and many associations see the benefit of fewer bodies to deal with or pay money to. There was a lot of reference to technology being a significant issue for club administrators who are frustrated by much of the current provision.
- Good governance – clubs support the ability to influence decision making and expect greater transparency and better governance from some of the bodies that they currently work with.
- A common league rules framework has strong support from a large majority of respondents.
- The concept of a ‘fairer, more equal’ structure in terms of opportunities to progress is supported.

**More detailed work is required on some elements of the proposal:**

- Umpiring structures require more work given the scale of change proposed and the wider challenges facing umpiring bodies that handle independent appointments.
- Balancing travel v competition standards
- Greater definition is required in terms of the proposals related to junior competition. Current structures are far more variable than adult leagues with some excellent practice in some areas and large gaps in others. In particular, the split of responsibilities between Areas and Sub-Area needs to be clearer.
- The governance of the Areas and Sub Areas needs to be carefully considered to strike the right balance between accountability and local direction versus national alignment.
- Whilst the initial scope excluded schools hockey the process for aligning the schools agenda with the proposal needs to be clear with appropriate associated timescales.
- Assets in existing organisations that are either absorbed or dissolved need managing properly locally to ensure they are retained appropriately in the sport. In some bodies the amount in reserves is not known and this is a concern to clubs.

**In terms of the change process the following points were made:**

- Loss of voluntary resource is a concern in existing organisations. The change needs to be managed to encourage the retention of as many people as reasonably possible. Many respondents from clubs also referenced that delivering improvements in working practices (conference calls/technology) might help to attract new volunteers.
- Previous attempts to improve the use of technology by England Hockey were criticised by many respondents. A clear, deliverable, long-term plan needs to be demonstrated here.
- This is a significant change management exercise and needs to be well led with a clear implementation plan that is well managed.
- England Hockey's capacity and capability to lead the change was questioned by some (but also supported by others). England Hockey needs to be honest about some previous failings and demonstrate that these have been taken on board in the approach.

**Clubs said that the following critical elements were necessary in the final proposal:**

- The detailed geography of league areas is required to help many clubs make a final decision.
- An implementation plan must be provided to convince people that the changes are deliverable in the time period.
- Financial information needs to be provided to convince many clubs that there is not an increased cost from this revised approach.

When asked what the respondents voting intention was the overall picture was 61% in favour and 19% against the proposals. The majority of abstentions referenced the need for more detail rather than disagreement with the principles behind the proposal. Clubs have significantly the largest share of vote at the AGM and 73% of respondents from clubs were in favour with only 15% against at this stage. The view of associations was more of abstention at this stage as more consultation was undertaken with 45% abstaining, 32% in favour and 23% against the proposal.

The level of support for the proposal in its current format, subject to further details in some key areas, indicates that the membership would like England Hockey to progress with the proposal.



# Changes and additions to proposal



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## 5. Changes and additions to proposal

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The feedback received has led to some changes as well as considerably more detail on many elements of the proposal that are outlined in the remainder of this booklet. The following sections of the document outline these but the main changes in the final proposal to be put to the AGM are as follows:

- Governance relationship with England Hockey – balancing national / local decision making.
- Timing – some of the timings of change have been adapted from the initial proposal to allow more time to transition between approaches. Given that many areas of the game are interlinked some of the changes need to occur in unison whilst some other areas can follow in due course. The transition times for masters, umpiring organisations and the detailed arrangement for the Sub-Areas have been extended.
- Sub-Areas - more clarification is provided on the approach and timings for Sub-Areas.
- Adult Competitions - more detail is provided including outline league structures.
- Junior Competitions - Area and Sub-Area responsibilities have been defined with a clear ‘delegation’ relationship between the Area and Sub-Area where Sub-Areas are appropriate to lead on certain competitions. An outline junior competitions framework is also provided.
- Financial implications for clubs and Area and Sub-Area draft budgets are included.
- A technology update is provided including the approach England Hockey is taking here.





# Functional Areas



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## 6. Functional Areas

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### Adult Leagues and Competitions

#### *Principles and Rationale*

In principle the proposed structure of eight Areas was accepted through the consultation but there was a requirement for England Hockey to provide the necessary detail for clubs on what it would mean for their adult league hockey.

The proposed changes are not made lightly. There are a number of reasons for such significant change that were shared during the previous consultation and roadshows.

Firstly, the structure of hockey is fairly imbalanced with significant differences between the playing numbers in each of the current Regions; the new structure provides eight similarly sized Areas (in terms of player numbers). This should help make the breadth and depth of competition relatively more equal and give clubs a fairer opportunity to progress through the league pyramid. Through these changes we recognise that some well run, traditionally strong organisations such as the South Leagues and North Leagues will no longer exist in their current format despite the administrative strength and capability of these organisations.

The disparate nature of our existing league structure is also a challenge to providing more consistent structures. This issue is more prevalent in Women's hockey than Men's hockey with far more separate league bodies that, whilst most are well run, means that many clubs have different rules for different teams in their club as well as many different organisations to deal with, all having different administration practices. Overall clubs have generally consolidated and grown making many of these differences more stark and more problematic than before. There was strong feedback from clubs supporting a simpler structure.

A common approach to league rules and regulations has been consistently strongly supported by clubs and most administrative bodies. There are good practice examples of more aligned approaches to this with the current East Region having jointly administered leagues for Men and Women with common rules and the North Region which has recently agreed common rules at Regional Level. Equally there are a few leagues that efficiently administer, through one committee, the whole programme for the Men's League or Women's League such as the West Men, West Women, and Midlands Men's Leagues.

Rules, however, are very varied and can make clubs lives extremely difficult when trying to manage the increasing variability of players' availability across teams.

Rules and regulations broadly cover the following topics: Match start times, time slot length, match sheets and reporting, player registration, umpire requirements, player movement (within a club), player transfers, match officials, travel time/distances, doubling up/guest players, facility and pitch standards, calendar alignment (National League Saturday/ Sunday), half-term breaks, pyramid principles (e.g. how many divisions feeding into one, automatic promotion/relegation, playoffs), size of divisions (10/12 teams).

Given the amount of variance there is a need to go through a process of establishing the best practice and what clubs and players prefer. To ensure the best approach is taken a consultation will run with clubs in the summer of 2020 before a final framework of rules is created by December 2020.

The intent will be to deliver a framework of rules that are appropriate to the level of play, with the overall aim being to have regulations proportionate to level of play that are consistent across both genders of adult league

hockey and complimentary to the needs of junior competitions. An example of what the framework could look like is set out below.

Level	Elite	Aspiring	Competitive	Recreational
Pyramid Level	1 2	4 8	16 32	32 (64 if used)
League Tier	1 2	3 4	5 6 7 8	9 10 11 12 etc
Teams per gender at this level (leagues of 12 below 4/8)	30	144	960	c900
Registration	Y	Y	Y	Y
Match Sheets	Y	Y	TBC	TBC
Restricted Overseas Players	Y	Y	N	N
Restrictions on amount of movement within club between club teams	Y	Y	Some	Some
Club Transfer restrictions	Y	Y	Y (in season)	Y (in season)

Linked to this, many of the consultees from clubs demonstrated a significant appetite for benefits that would come from a more aligned technology approach to league administration that would work better with club systems and other systems. This is a significant technological step from the current diverse approach and will take time to fully implement. Technology is covered later in this document.

It is recognised that the changes will mean that the top competitions in some of the new eight 'Areas' could be slightly weaker initially than in the current five Regions. However, opportunities to progress will be fairer and more equal than previously between different parts of the country and the best teams will still rise to the play each other. The current regions that are proposed to split will also become comparable to the other areas that are not changing by much and this will create a more equal level for competition and entry to the England Hockey League. Also the expansion in the England Hockey Leagues over the past few years from 40 teams in 2018-19 to 60 in 2019-20 and then 70 in 2021-22 means that the equivalent to playing at the top Regional level in 2018-19 would be playing in the England Hockey League Conferences by 2021-22.

The make-up of the two EHL Division Ones and four EHL Conference Divisions will be allocated annually based on the teams who are promoted/relegated to that level i.e. this will not automatically be determined by a team's Area. The 'top' (Tier 1) of the club game is overseen by the Elite Domestic Game and is outside the scope of the AGM Resolution. The Elite Domestic Game Panel of top club representatives has been consulted as part of the process and kept informed.

Whilst the Conferences will be broadly based on the pairs of feeder league that feed them - North West/North East, Midlands/East, Greater London/South East/South Central, and South West, it will be the exact geographical spread of qualifying teams at the end of the 2020-21 season that will determine how they are split into conferences.

Once the new structure is in place the eight Area winners will be promoted and bottom two teams in each Conference relegated. The number of teams relegated from the Conferences to an Area will of course impact relegation from an Area top division.

When reviewing this section it is strongly recommended that clubs consider the timeline from implementation (Season 2021-22) and the fact that there will be two sets of promotions and relegations before the proposed structure will come into place, so focusing on the exact position of one club team or your specific circumstances at this point in time is unlikely to be exactly the same when the changes occur.

The detailed draft Adult league structure is available here: [www.englishockey.co.uk/astructurefitforthefuture](http://www.englishockey.co.uk/astructurefitforthefuture)

## Indoor Championships

Provision of indoor hockey varies around the country, often driven by pockets of local interest. Throughout the review process there has been evident differences of opinion amongst clubs on the importance of indoor with some strong supporters and some very disinterested. Indoor is not currently a strategic priority for England Hockey but competitive structures are provided. There are relatively few fundamental changes proposed by this review.

**Adults** - Currently the five Regions each nominate one qualifier for Super 6s Division Two with a sixth qualifier coming from the Region with the most participating teams. They join six teams who qualify based on their placing in Division Two in the previous season. Under the new format each Area would nominate one qualifier and they will join four teams who qualify based on their placing in Division Two in the previous season.

**Juniors** - Currently the five Regions each nominate two qualifiers for each national championship. Under the new format each Area would nominate one qualifier.

## Summer and other Competitions (e.g. County Cups)

Where there is demand for these and they are run in appropriate places within the England Hockey calendar they should continue. Summer leagues, in particular, are provided to respond to local demand.

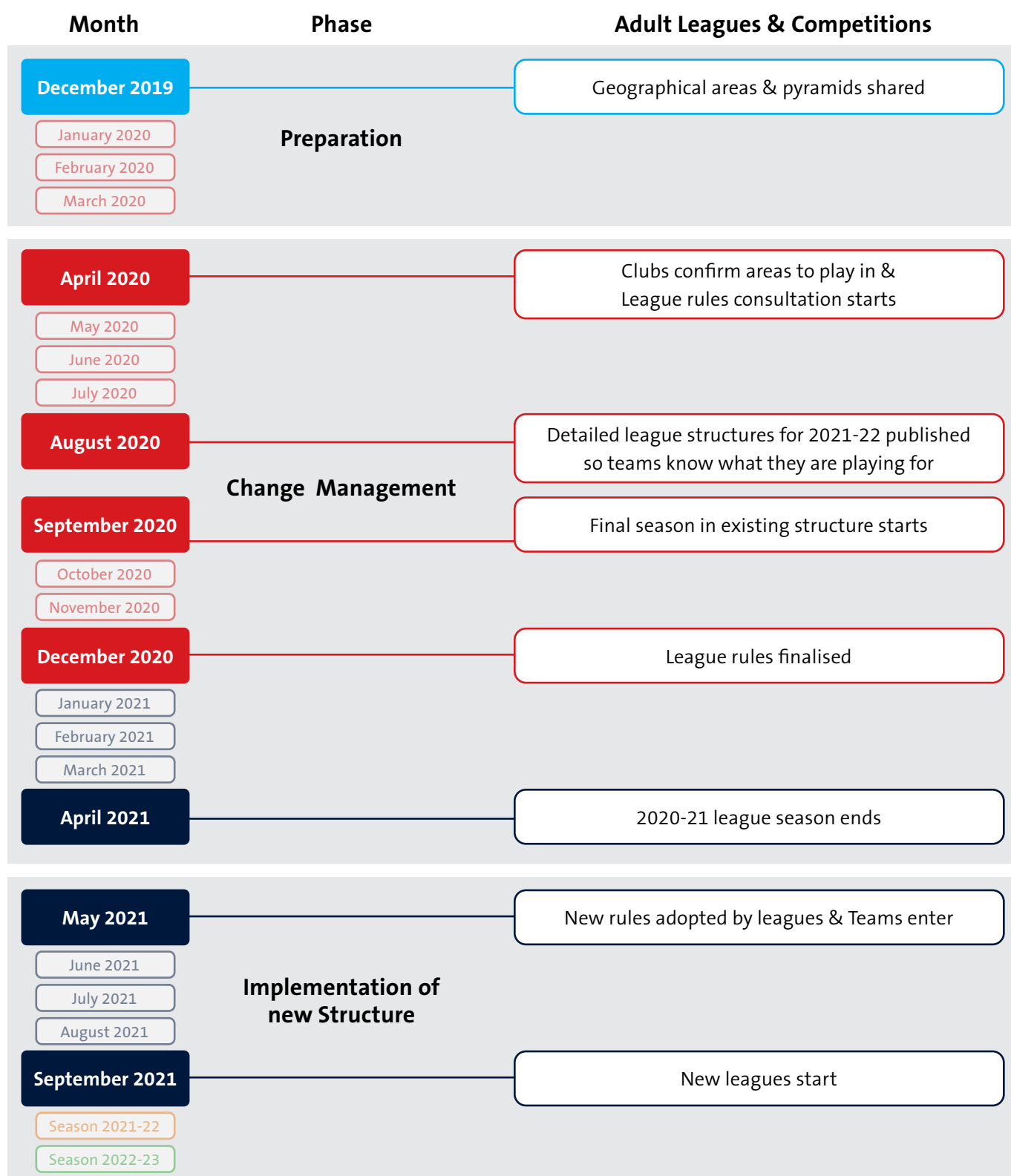




## England Hockey Championships

England Hockey runs direct entry competitions as part of the England Hockey Championships. If the changes are accepted at the AGM there is the scope to review these in partnership with Areas to ascertain if the new structure would better support club knockout competitions. Masters and Mixed Championships will continue in their current format and England Hockey will also continue to run Summer Masters Championships that have shown growth in the two years since their introduction.

### Timeline for change



## Junior Competitions

The junior club game has grown significantly since the 2012 Olympics with twice as many junior players than in 2011. The growth has been driven mostly at the 6-13 age group.

The structure of junior hockey has been patchy in developing alongside this growth. There are hugely well-established structures such as the Yorkshire Youth Hockey League, the Greater Manchester Youth League and the Home Counties Leagues that all provide excellent outlets for club competition although often in isolation of other structures. 'Badgers' (mixed adult and junior teams intended to be played in a friendly spirit) are also common with good examples in Norfolk, Bristol and many other places.

Tiering was introduced into the nationally run England Hockey Junior Championships in 2017 and this has helped continued growth in entry numbers and to enable teams to compete at an appropriate level.

Elsewhere, however, there are gaps in provision with less formal structures in place or a lack of opportunity for young club players. The lack of aligned governance creates calendar clashes that cause frustration for club administrators. There is considerable room for improvement whilst also a need to carefully align and maintain the good practice that is in place.

Junior provision is more complicated than adult competition given the age-groups that players are split into and the different game formats used in hockey. Considerations therefore need to cover the following:

- Club junior sections varying significantly in size. Many clubs around the country have capacity challenges with waiting lists fairly common in some places.
- Facility access challenges.
- Travel challenges.
- Needs the flexibility for variable provision of competitive activity.
- Accessibility where lack of parental support.
- Parental / Academic / other sport pressures.
- Capacity of Coaches and volunteers and calendar clashes.

In the new structure clear leadership on the Junior competition structure, aligned to the national framework, will come from the Areas. Often the delegation of activity to Sub-Areas, with Sub-Areas running certain activities, will be an appropriate approach to allow many of the successful local competitions to continue but also recognise and respond to gaps in provision.

All junior competitions/leagues will need to be within the governance of an Area or Sub-Area and with this in place the structure can be more aligned and consistent. At the higher end of this framework this can drive a more consistent and effective calendar. A more aligned structure that is more consistent will also support the provision of England Hockey competitions and appropriate national finals.

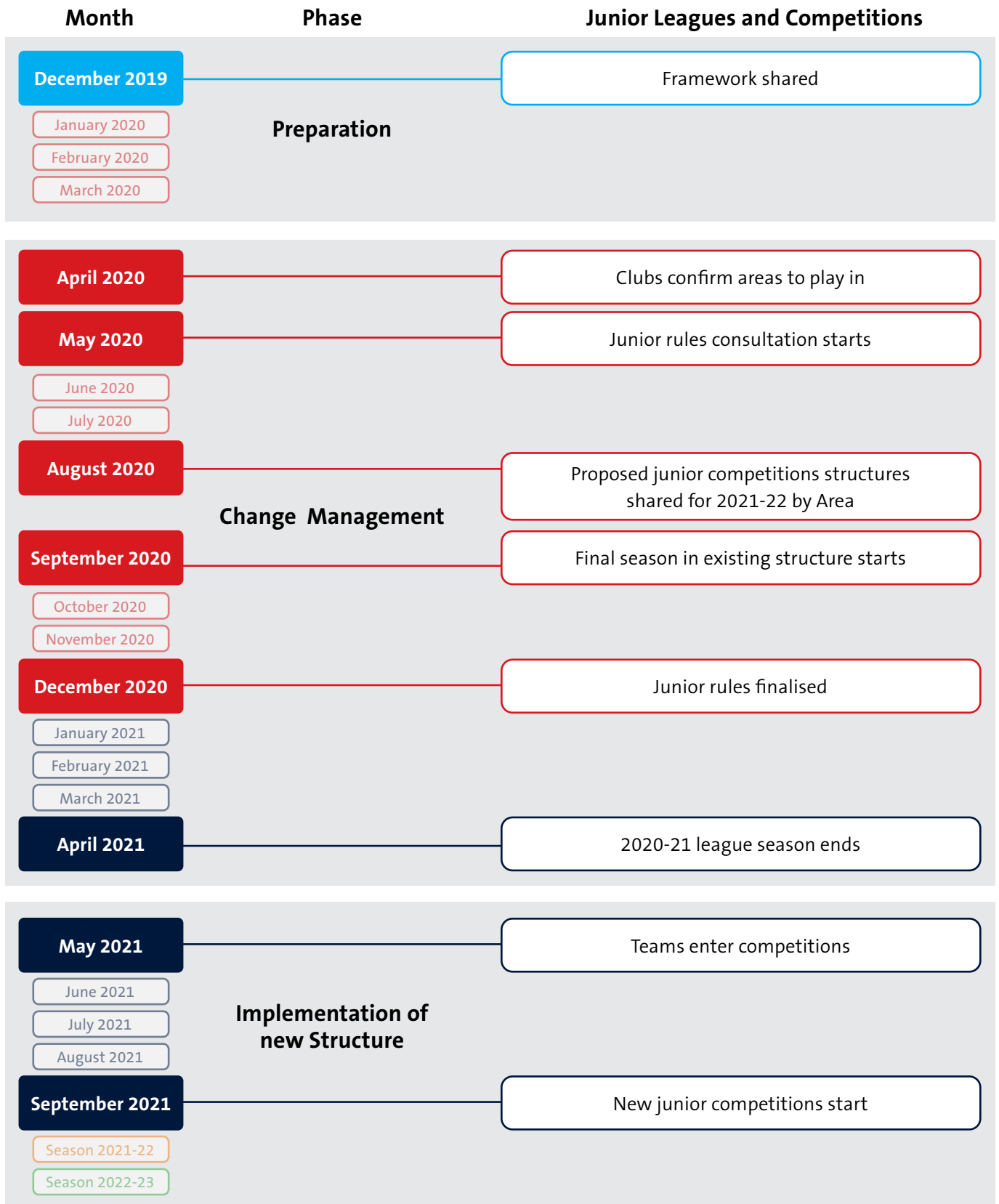
In principle the Junior Competition Framework would look like this.

Age Group	Game Format	Competition Format	Current Provision	Future Provision
Under 8	Quicksticks / In2Hockey	Festivals	Club run County facilitated*	Club intra or inter run & Area/ Sub-Area facilitated
Under 10/12	In2Hockey	Festivals / Central Venue Leagues County Finals	Club run Counties Leagues** County In2 champs (go on to EH National Champs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Club Festivals / Central Venue Leagues - Area facilitated</li> <li>• To EH Champs from the above at u12</li> </ul>
Under 14	In2Hockey 11 a side	Festivals Leagues / Central Venue EH Championships	Some development festivals Counties Leagues** EH Championships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tier 3 Development Festivals or Leagues (In2) – Area/Sub Area led and club run</li> <li>• Tier 2 - Local Leagues (11 a side) – central venue or home/away Area led. Leading to Area finals</li> <li>• Tier 1 - Area Leagues (11 a side) – home/away. Area led leading to National stages including finals</li> </ul>
Under 16	11 a side	Leagues EH Championships	Counties Leagues** EH Championships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tier 2 - Local Leagues (11 a side) – central venue or home/away Area led. Leading to Area finals</li> <li>• Tier 1 - Area Leagues (11 a side) – home/away. Area led but may</li> </ul>
Under 18	11 a side	Leagues EH Championships	Counties Leagues** EH Championships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Leagues (11 a side) – central venue or home/away. Area or Sub Area led.</li> <li>• EH Tier 1, 2, 3 Championships (11 a side) – Nationally organised and may extend over area boundaries leading to National stages including finals</li> </ul>
'Development/ Badgers'	11 a side with a few adults	Local – informal	Run by some Counties / leagues / clubs	Part of formal adult league structure (but partitioned off as are Masters Leagues)

\*Not in every case but a fairly common approach

\*\*Counties includes county leagues such as Yorkshire, Kent or Home Counties leagues

## Timeline for change





## Umpiring & Officiating

### *Current Position*

The provision of the current Umpiring and Officiating bodies across the country has grown organically, where there is no commonality within the practices of these associations or how they are servicing the umpiring pathway across the country. With 37 different associations playing their part in the current umpiring pathways, the ability to progress varies from region to region and the timescales for umpire progression are variable and can provide barriers to individuals wishing to support hockey as umpires or officials.

Over 82% of adult league matches are currently being umpired by club members. The overall number of matches taking place weekly within the country would indicate a larger percentage due to Junior Matches, Schools and University competitions all taking place with limited knowledge or interaction with umpiring associations.

For the last few years over 2,000 individuals per year have undertaken courses to become umpires but the support for these umpires is varied due to the pressures on umpiring bodies, with few opportunities to receive ongoing support and less clarity on who is to provide this support. Schemes such as the Club Umpire Developer programme have been put in place to address this but opportunities to progress and the appetite of people to become an 'independently appointed' umpire are both significant barriers.

### *Future Arrangements*

For the matches umpired by club members the aim is to ensure that league rules support the provision of the right umpire to the right game by ensuring that the requirements are consistent across genders and deliverable by clubs. People should be able to play a game and umpire another if they wish and be supported to do this wherever desired.

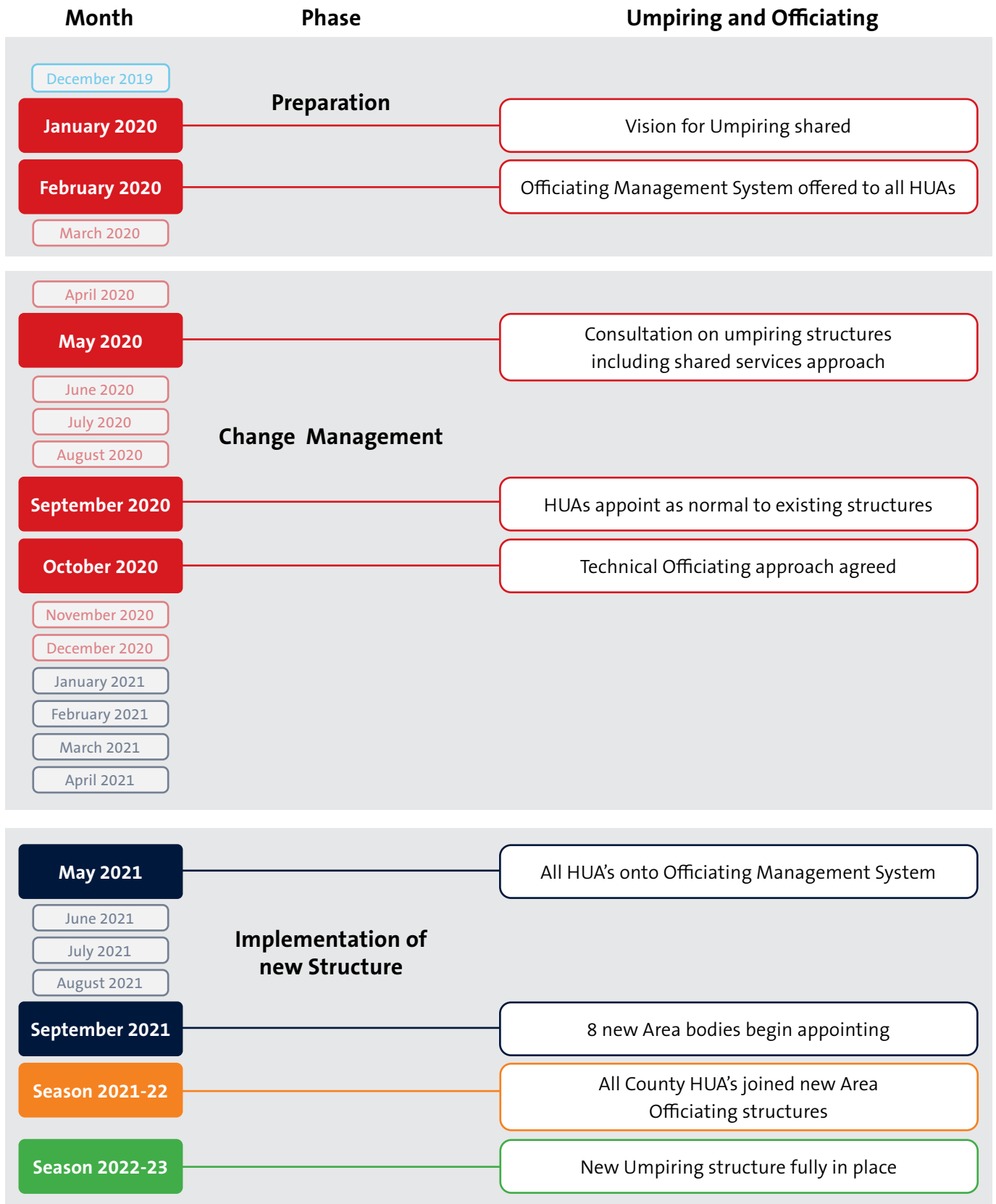
In the appointed umpiring structure, the proposed restructuring will give umpiring an opportunity to better connect with other governance structures servicing the game at national and local level. Introducing Umpiring and Officiating in to the "Area" structure (as an Umpiring Sub-Committee) enables existing volunteers to align their efforts within a more consistent framework for the betterment of the game at all levels, as well as to continue to provide a service to the clubs and leagues in their area.

There will be a shared vision for the Umpiring and Officiating groups to "provide a national structure, delivered locally". The umpiring committee would work closely with the other volunteers in their area. They would be accountable for the development of umpires inside and outside of neutrally appointed pools and support clubs to develop their own umpires at all ages and levels.

Technical Officiating already exists within some current associations, with Regional Technical Official Coordinators already promoting this as an opportunity for individuals to operate at Regional and National Competitions. Having a presence within the Umpiring "Sub-Committee" within the Area structure will enable more opportunities for officials to participate within our game as well as opening this as an opportunity for others to continue their involvement with our sport.

Members of each area's Umpiring Sub-Committee will participate in working groups with the National Umpiring Body and England Hockey to review educational delivery and support to mentors, as well as ensuring current pathways are effectively managed within a Single Body Approach, sharing best practice and knowledge to deliver a greater impact in the "Club Appointed" levels of hockey.

## Timeline for change



## Discipline

### *Current Position*

There are more than 50 Discipline Officers with every county currently having a Discipline Officer for the 200-300 Red Cards, misconduct and disrepute offences we see nationally each year. The distribution of these offences is variable with some County Discipline Officers having few cards to deal with and some a fairly large number. Whilst roles are generally filled, the variable nature of the work and expertise required to deal with difficult cases makes the recruitment of the right people challenging.

The majority of leagues take no direct responsibility for managing discipline matters.

### *Future Arrangements*

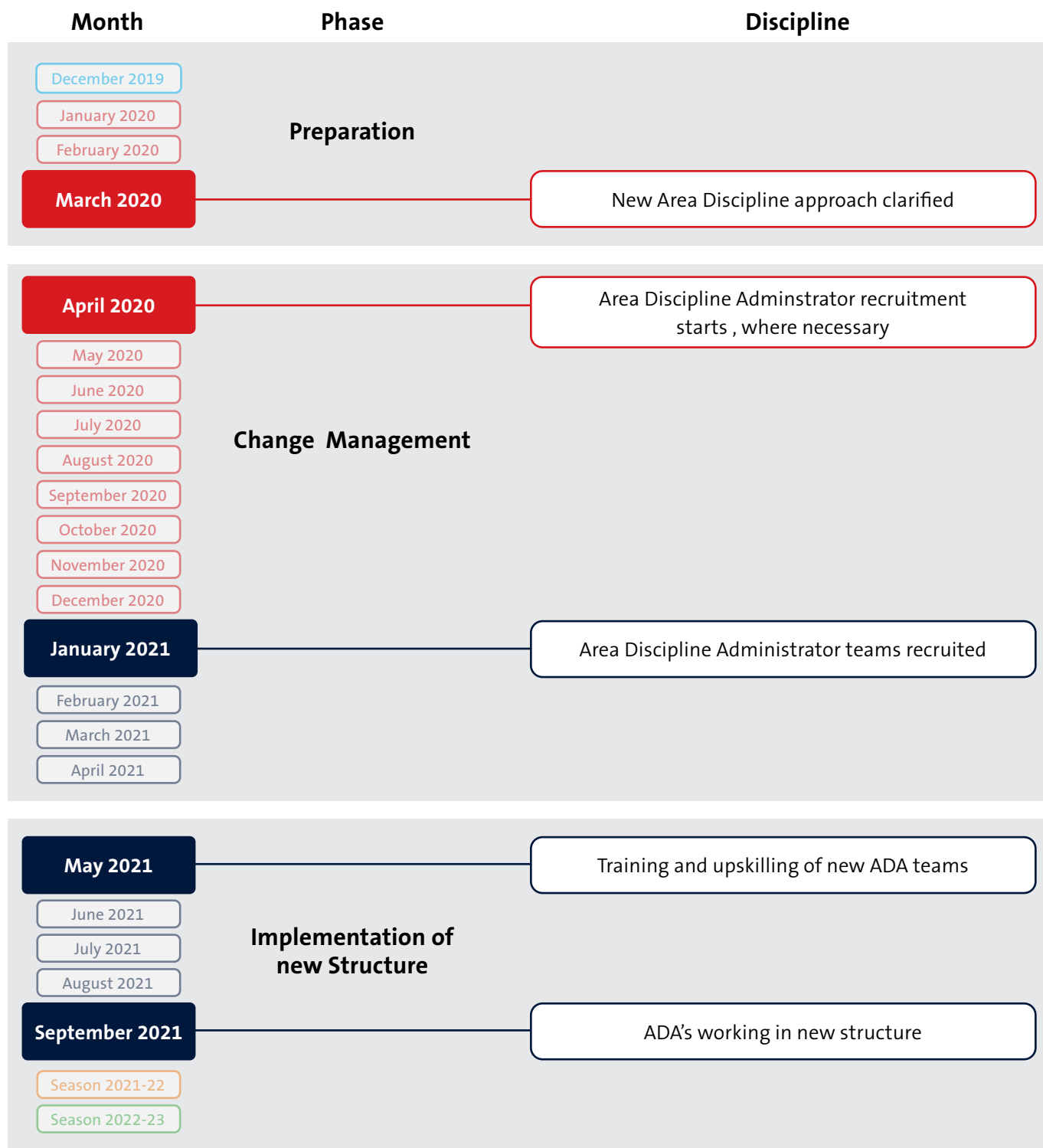
In the proposal, discipline will be a function of the Area level. There would be eight Area Discipline Administrators (ADA) feeding into the National Disciplinary Officer. Working with each of the eight Area Discipline Administrators (ADA's) would be a pool of Discipline Administrators. The number of administrators will be determined by the workload seen in each Area. Ideally many current County Discipline Administrators will join these new teams. Work can be shared out more equally and a clear succession plan created and this should help resolve the peaks/troughs that current County and Regional Discipline Administrators face. Conflicts of interest can also be more easily avoided.

Technology is already being used in this area with a shared filing system and private discussion forum already hosted by England Hockey and used by Regional Discipline Administrators.

The timeline sets out the plan to have new ADA's in post from before the start of the new bodies in April 2021 so that the necessary training and development can be provided.



## Timeline for change





## Masters

### *Current position*

Masters hockey has four levels of activity currently: Club, County, Regional and International. The provision at club and county level is inconsistent according to a mixture of demand and the somewhat variable provision of competitions to play in.

Club Masters activity normally takes place through informal fixtures, leagues and cup competitions with the number of Masters teams in England Hockey competitions continuing to grow.

County Masters activity is fairly new with competitions in the East and West but little provision elsewhere. This is largely seen as a social exercise and a chance to connect with old local teammates or opposition.

Regional Masters is a more serious competition currently organised as a tournament between the regions at a central venue. Regions enter teams at age groups from over 35 up to over 75.

The number of players playing in clubs eligible for Masters Hockey has been growing at a rate of about 9% year on year for the last 10 years. Currently the number of players identified via club affiliation by existing region is as follows. These are players regularly playing club hockey during the season rather than any 'representative masters only' players that only play for representative teams.

Current Region	Men Aged 36-45	Men Aged 46+	Women Aged 36-45	Women Aged 46+
East	1,298	1,563	1,138	984
Midlands	1,102	1,661	996	836
North	1,314	1,280	1,346	981
South	2,500	3,060	2,037	1,605
West	931	1,034	1,036	903

### *Future arrangements*

Based on the consistent growth the proposal recommends increasing the provision of Masters' hockey.

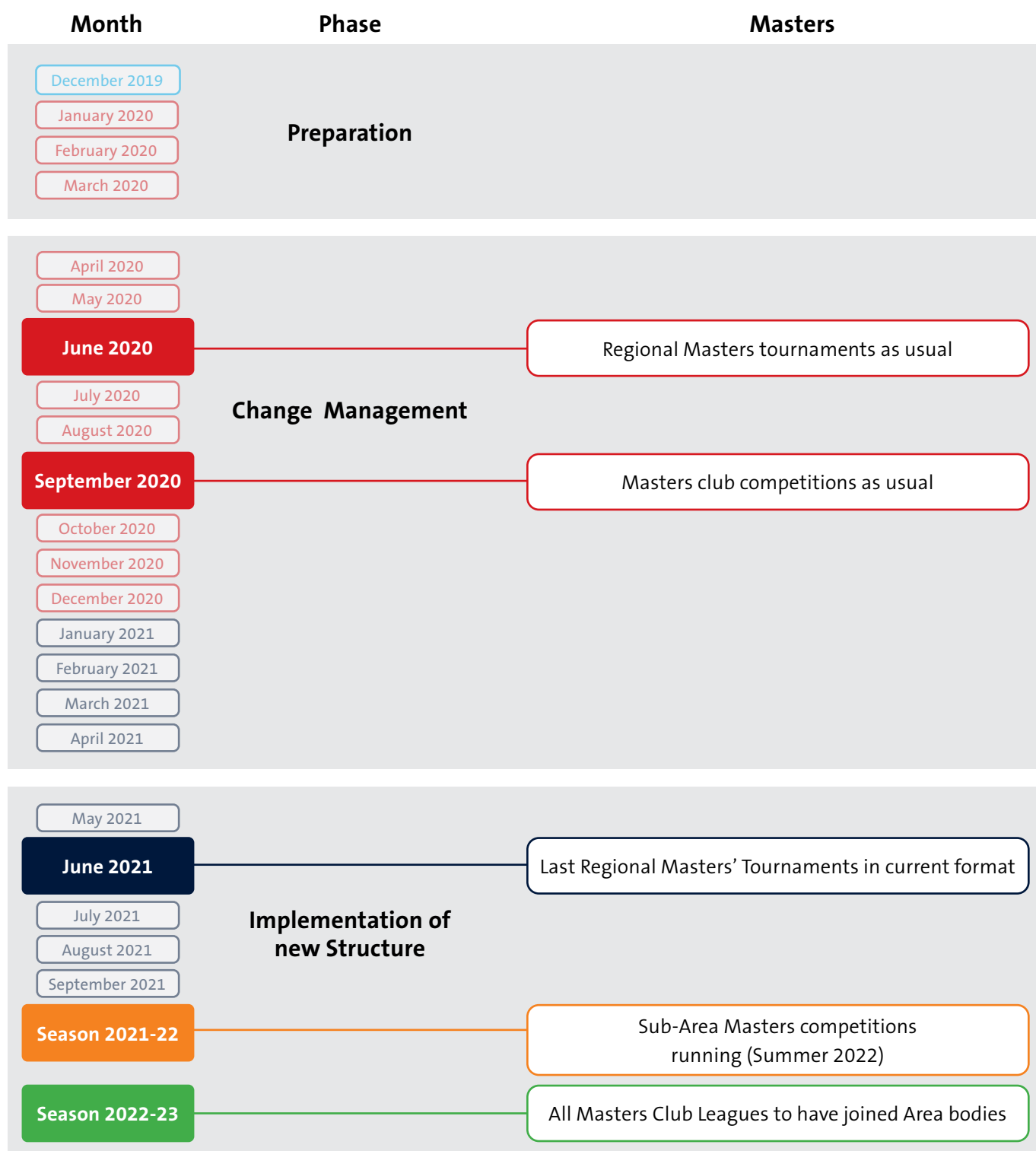
At club level the provision for Masters' hockey has grown fairly organically through local leagues and the England Hockey competition programme. Through working with existing league and competition providers and aligning the provision of England Hockey club competitions, a more systematic approach would help to increase the consistency of opportunities. In the proposal the new Area bodies have a clearly defined function for Masters' hockey, both representative teams and club level provision. Any existing Masters leagues will be expected to align to the new Areas. In some areas there may need to be collaboration between Areas to provide activity for club teams of a suitable standard for the different age groups. There is also an appetite for Masters' competitions in the summer as players from across club teams join up with ex-players and enter England Hockey Masters Summer Championships with year on year entries for this growing.

The good practice examples of County Masters teams, as currently run in the East and West Regions, will be built upon as an outlet for players that want to start to play for representative teams. The intent is that these tournaments will be locally run within Areas, cost effective to deliver and aimed at providing enjoyable experiences for players. At this stage of development there isn't the intent for a national competition but that could be reviewed over time.

At Area level the current Regional championships of five teams would aim to develop into a competition structure including the eight Areas. In the initial years it may be necessary to merge Areas to create teams, particularly at older age groups, but as the number of participants and administrative structures develop to support the growth in Masters' hockey this structure will be deliverable.

For the sake of clarity International Masters hockey was outside the scope of this review.

### *Timeline for change*



## Player Pathway

Reviewing or fundamentally changing the Player Pathway was outside the scope of this review apart from looking at the implications for governance. It was set up in 2005 (as the Single System) and is overseen by a joint committee of the current Regions with England Hockey.

England Hockey's strategic ambition is to be systemically and consistently top three in the world in both genders by 2027. There is much to be done if we are to achieve this ambition.

The aspiration is for a talent identification and development system which attracts and excites young people irrespective of their background and inspires them to be the best they can be. It is for a pathway that is delivered through a range of inspirational and high-quality talent development environments which sets new standards for performance and provides positive player experiences which encourage a long-term involvement in hockey.

The purpose of the current Player Pathway is to develop the skills and characteristics critical to becoming a successful international hockey player whilst retaining young players in the sport. We recognise that the Player Pathway is one environment that supports around 15,000 players across regional and country programmes, but that there are many other environments and stakeholders who contribute to the holistic development of young hockey players.

The Player Pathway was reviewed in 2013 and, as we work with UK Sport and Sport England on our future performance and talent development strategy, it will be reviewed again in the coming months.



# Governance & Overarching Elements



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## 7. Governance & Overarching Elements

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### Governance

The areas will be new legal entities. The Governance Relationship of the new Areas and Sub-Areas with England Hockey is crucial for an aligned approach for years to come and will ensure the right balance in decision making between local accountability and a consistent national framework. The following was agreed by the England Hockey Board of Directors in November 2019 and will be used as the basis for the more detailed terms of references and organisational policies that will need to be developed:

The current governance structure of the sport has grown organically and, consequently, is complex with little in the way of defined organisational roles and responsibilities, few clear lines of communication and limited accountability. The proposed structure allows for clear lines of communication and the means by which organisations can hold one another to account on their express responsibilities.

In order to ensure the accountability of organisations, the relationships with one another must be officially recognised. Currently the relationship between England Hockey and Clubs is via the affiliation process and England Hockey and Associations is via the articles of association. Whilst the Associations are members of England Hockey there is no formal governance relationship for England Hockey with the Associations. Regions and Counties are effectively independent. Many other bodies that have developed are to all intents and purposes independent of all other bodies (mostly leagues and HUAs that are, in many cases, only answerable to their membership rather than any wider structures).

As a reminder the AGM Resolution set out a clear set of principles for the future governance of the sport that have already been agreed through this process. They are as follows:

### VISION

A robust governance structure that allows for maximum participation in hockey within a safe environment underpinned by an organisational structure that ensures consistency, accountability, transparency and communication at all levels.

### PRINCIPLES

Seven overarching principles of future good governance in hockey were established by the Working Group. These principles are derived directly from the results of the consultation process. They are as follows:

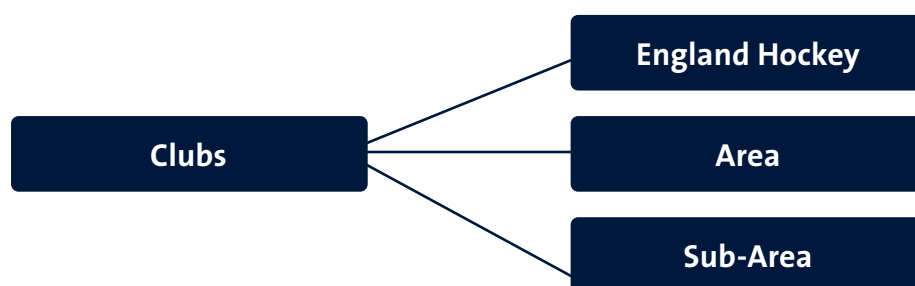
- ❶ As National Governing Body, England Hockey has overall responsibility for the sport in England
- ❷ There is a fundamental role for local organisation and decision making
- ❸ Clarification of accountability of all organising bodies to their stakeholders and ultimately to England Hockey is required
- ❹ Simplification of structure should be the aim to make it easier for all involved
- ❺ Clarity of purpose is key for all organising bodies

6 Common principles of governance are necessary for all organising bodies

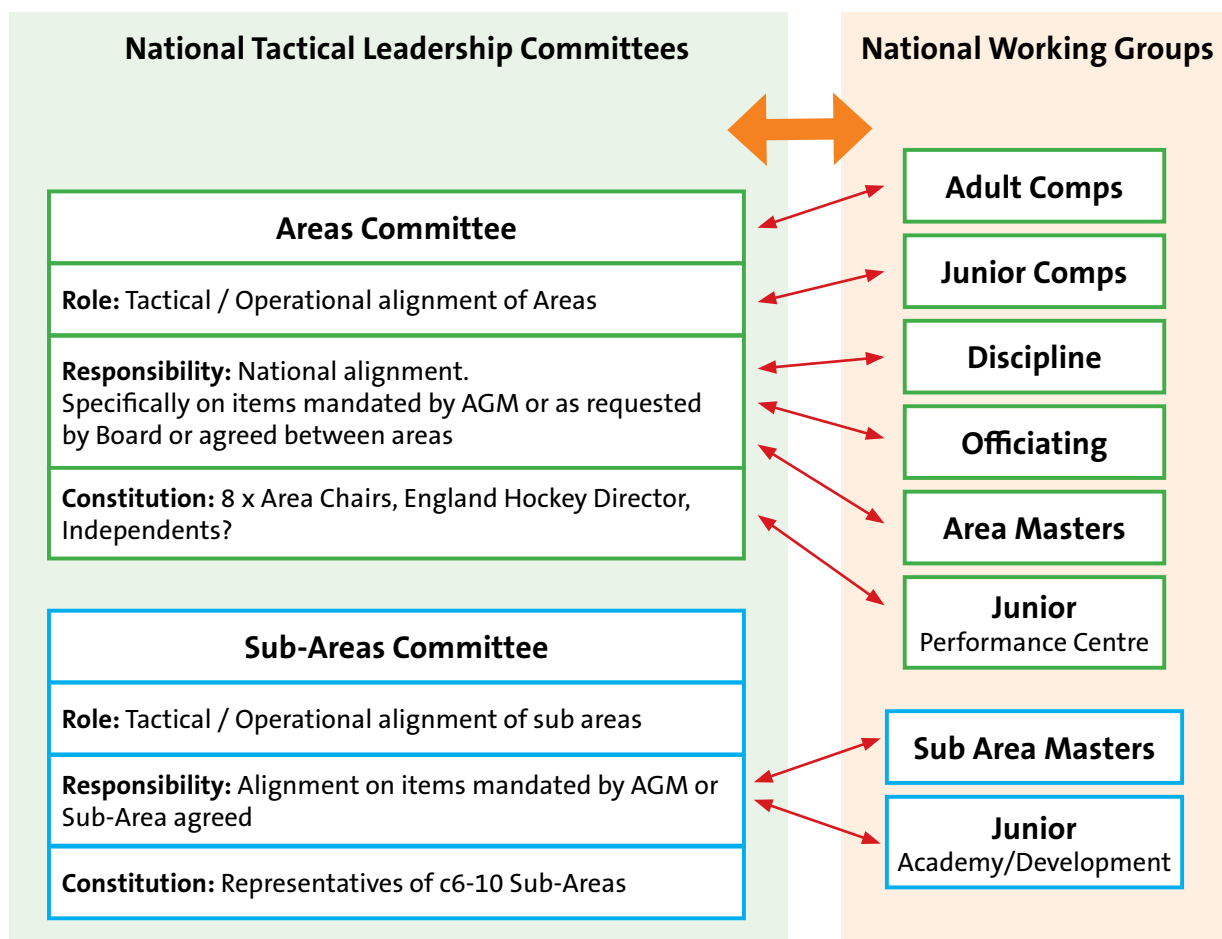
7 Consistency of overarching policies, rules and regulations is required for all aspects relating to playing hockey

The proposed structure needs to create accountable relationships with clear lines of communication through an agreement between all parties. This would allow for a mechanism by which organisations could hold one another to account where there has been a failing in the performance of all defined responsibilities and or 'good governance' processes.

In simple terms clubs will be a direct affiliated member of the three governance levels in the sport and all payments and entry fees will be made directly to only these three organisations. The Areas and Sub-Areas would remain voting members of England Hockey, as they are now.



There would be an updated committee structure linked to England Hockey that will ensure that the membership influence is retained in decision making. The Areas Committee and Sub Areas Committee would operate under the delegated authority of the England Hockey Board and the Area Committee would have a seat on the Board.



Many of the groups in the proposed structure already exist and would be aligned to this structure. The main gaps currently relate to adult and junior competitions which sit outside of any national framework.

The structure proposed is aligned to two clear principles: One of **communication** and one of **accountability**.

## Communication

Effective communication has been a common theme throughout the consultation. This is obviously two way and includes the following requirements: *Reporting, directing, consulting, advising*.

As a result of the AGM Resolution the leadership in the sport will be consolidated to England Hockey, the eight Areas and the Sub-Areas. The only bodies outside of these would be affiliated members such as clubs or the unique bodies such as the UK Armed Forces Hockey Association. All other bodies would be part of their Area or Sub-Area. This will reduce the number of current constituted bodies (e.g. organisations with separate bank accounts) by more than 50 with a corresponding reduction in the number of committees and volunteers required.

Body	Number	Decision Making Body	Committees*
England Hockey	1	England Hockey Board	Audit Remuneration Nominations Discipline Appeals Elite Domestic Game Panel Umpiring and Officiating Committee Technical Appointments Panel Player Pathway Committee
Areas	8	Management Committee / Board	Adult Leagues & Competitions Junior Leagues & Competitions Discipline Officiating (Umpiring & Technical) Masters Performance Centres
Sub-Areas	40+	Management Committee / Board	Academy and Development Centres Masters

\*where appropriate as some leaner approaches to delivery may absorb the activity into Management Committee work

## England Hockey

As the National Governing Body of the sport, the role of England Hockey is to be the body responsible for the legislative, regulatory and policy compliance of the sport including the implementation of rule changes, the growth of the sport, supporting international success and drafting and enforcing regulations and policies underpinning discipline and safeguarding.

### *Areas and a new '8 Area Committee'*

The AGM Resolution proposal seeks more alignment in structures and processes across the country to help make club administrators lives easier. To deliver this alignment, but ensure that it is also member driven, the eight Areas would align to a consistent governance approach. Collectively this group would work together through a new '8 Area Committee' and would ensure the successful delivery against the functions owned by the Areas. They would have an observer seat on the Board of England Hockey as the Regions Consultative Committee (RCC) does now. It would aim to identify and agree where improvements and efficiencies are required and make recommendations to the England Hockey Board where necessary.

Linked to the new '8 Area Committee' would be formal Working Groups with members from each of the eight Areas focusing on the key functions of the Areas:

- Adult Leagues and Competitions
- Junior Leagues and Competitions
- Officiating (Umpiring & Technical)
- Discipline
- Masters
- Player Pathway\*\*\*

\*\*\*subject to the regular review of the Player Pathway

The RCC, which is currently a committee of the company (not the Board) would be replaced by the new '8 Area Committee'. The status of the RCC is unique and will need to be considered carefully in terms of the new approach. Subject to approval of these proposals at the 2020 England Hockey AGM detailed terms of reference, template constitutions and the necessary changes to the England Hockey Articles would be drafted and consulted upon ready for approval at the 2021 AGM.

### *Sub Areas*

The initial proposal referenced Sub-Areas. This was a term that was never intended to remain in the medium term but was used to challenge the assumption that all counties would continue. Through the consultation it was clear that in many/most cases a county will remain as the logical choice to be a Sub Area.

However, there were some existing geographical areas that presented particular challenges. These can be broadly categorised into the following groups:

- Urban areas where identity/boundaries are not clear or travel is very difficult
- Counties where there are significant anomalies (e.g. the identity is no longer in use or hockey is single gender only)



- Counties that are too small to function effectively
- Governance anomalies where Player Pathway Academy Centre/Development Centre activity isn't governed by the County

Further discussions will set out a process and a timeline for confirming the exact arrangements for resolving the anomalies.

England Hockey will require a clear governance arrangement with Sub-Areas. This should be direct via effective communication but with 40+ Sub-Area bodies it will require representative groups to be formed or retained.

It is recommended that England Hockey has two Working Groups to cover the two functions identified for Sub-Areas. These would be formed of a number of representatives from Sub-Areas ensuring sufficient geographic spread:

- Player Pathway Academy Centre / Development Centres
- Masters Representative teams

## **Accountability**

Accountability must be two-way and includes:

- Transparency – financial and processes
- Compliance – legislative, regulatory, policies and processes
- Integrity
- Fairness
- Inclusivity

The accountable organisations in the new structure (excluding clubs) are as follows:

- England Hockey Board
- 8 Areas
- 40+ Sub-Areas

As members of Areas, Sub-Areas and England Hockey, it will be for Clubs to endorse (via AGM's) the 'good governance' processes of these bodies. To do this, clear standards and expectations will be set that are visible to clubs.

The role, responsibility and good governance processes will be set out in a Constitution agreed and taken on by Areas and Sub-Areas, which will allow for 'check and challenge' either by Clubs through the AGM and/or Affiliation process or by England Hockey through the terms agreed in the Constitution. The Working Group will need to look at how accountability to member clubs and responsibility to England Hockey is balanced by the Areas.

The role, responsibility and good governance processes for England Hockey are set out in the Articles of Association and England Hockey is accountable to its members at its AGM.

Over time the greater use of technology will allow for better visibility of governance related documents, for example policies and relevant communications and minutes. Clubs will be able to identify those areas of non-compliance or non-performance of the bodies they affiliate to and hold them accountable for good governance.

## **Clubs on Boundaries**

Throughout the consultation the issue of clubs on boundaries was discussed. England Hockey was clear that some clubs were likely, as many do now, to fall on boundaries of geographical areas and sought views of clubs on the best approach to resolving this.

The proposed approach is that clubs select a 'primary competitive area' for their higher teams that are looking to progress to upper levels of competitions such as the England Hockey Leagues or Tier 1 or 2 England Hockey Championships. At lower levels of the structure (from Division Step 5 downwards – see diagram in Adult Leagues and Competitions section) clubs will be able to select their competition area. This should allow clubs on boundaries to recognise their playing base and demographic and negotiate local geography.

It is already commonplace in some leagues that teams play in different 'legs' of the league structure according to preference and balance of the league structure. As the approach to competition regulations will be aligned and technology improved it will be easier to ensure that these clubs do not gain a competitive advantage over others from crossing boundaries.

Clubs will be invited to select their Areas in April 2020 to build more detailed league structure before starting the 2020/2021 season.

## **Technology**

The current state of technology within hockey was widely criticised by clubs. This included criticism of local systems and practices (largely in terms of the number and the differences in systems that clubs were expected to use) and in terms of England Hockey's ability to lead and implement better systems. Current structures are varied, have little integration and make life more difficult than it needs to be for club administrators who work more across genders and the junior/senior boundaries than previously.

Through this proposal there is a clear recognition that significant investment will be required by England Hockey to bring about a better and more consistent approach. Lessons have been learned from previous England Hockey system developments and advice is being taken from other NGBs and various other bodies operating in technology in hockey. This advice recommends that one single 'top down' system that covers all administration needs in hockey is not advisable and a 'best of breed' approach that integrates the best systems for each need with a data warehouse is more appropriate. This has already started and is well underway with a data warehouse in place and systems being more integrated. This will allow data to be used across the sport without repeated input by administrators.

Partnerships are already in place with the common club management systems, Pitchero, Club Buzz and Teamo, and the intent will be to partner with more like this in due course so clubs can choose their preferred system.

There are three main technology gaps that have been identified:

- England Hockey's website/digital platform – this is out of date, hard to navigate and not personalised enough for the breadth of users. England Hockey have started work on this with a new site coming in 2020
- Hockey Administration 'Back office' - There is a need for slicker administration systems for clubs and Area/Sub-Area administrators to remove the amount of duplication.
- More integrated Competition/League Management systems – fixtures/results and player administration associated with league management, in particular, needs to be rationalised for club administrators. Paper team sheets and 'silo' systems need to change to appeal to the next generation of technology savvy administrator. There are significant time and content improvements that could be made here.

The second and third bullet points represent significant cultural changes in administration as well as system changes. Whilst England Hockey is committed to pursuing these with urgency, realistically it will take time to develop properly and embed fully. Given previous experiences and feedback, England Hockey will only launch when a system is ready and tested so implementation is likely to be staggered.

## Finance

One concern raised by clubs and associations through the feedback was that the proposed structure would cost clubs more. This is not the intent behind the changes and there are a number of elements of the proposal that will allow this to be controlled locally.

Firstly, all affiliation fees will be set by clubs at the Annual General Meetings of the Sub-Area, Area or England Hockey. This way it will always be clubs (and Areas/Sub-Areas as members of England Hockey) as voting members that agree any increase in fees. Over time a slicker approach to technology will be pursued to make the payment of fees to the three levels of body easier.

Secondly, England Hockey is not seeking to acquire any of the reserves that are currently held within the County, Region, League and other bodies. Getting an exact figure held in these reserves is inherently difficult given the governance structure and lack of visibility of finances in some organisations. However, the figure is known to be at least £2.5m and possibly over £3m. This has been acquired over the years by these organisations and England Hockey believes it should be used locally to develop the sport. Many of the organisations have prudently managed their reserves to an appropriate level and as a comparison England Hockey's reserves are in the region of £1.6m.

One of the main challenges with showing that these proposals will bring a consistency or reduction in costs for clubs is the massive variety of approaches and practices in place currently. In terms of income, county affiliation fees vary from £2 per team to £65 per club team and regional fees from £4 a team to £25 a team. Some organisations charge league entry fees separately, some within the wider 'wrapped up' fee from an organisation.

In terms of expenditure, the approaches also vary widely. Many organisations budget carefully with those intending to break even managing to do so although there are some areas where resources are more regularly spread across budget areas. Paid roles in administration exist in quite a few bodies with small to medium size

payments common in quite a few areas. This is most common in the Player Pathway for administrators but also in a few leagues and some key roles such as treasurers and secretaries.

Despite this challenge, below are two theoretical financial models based on the average financial practices that England Hockey has observed. These are based on researching and reviewing existing County and Regional budgets to create an indicative examples based on current levels.

## Area Budget

Income	Expenditure	Net Profit (Loss)
116560	115790	770

	Income	Expenditure
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### Governance

Affiliation fees (x500 teams)	5000	
IT	1000	
expenses	500	
meetings/travel	500	
insurance	750	
audit/accounting	250	
general admin	500	
Discipline administrator	1500	
Discipline appeals/admin	750	750

### Adult Leagues and Competitions

Adult league fees	10000	
paid admin		5000
website		1000
meetings + travel		750
trophies		350
grants/sponsorship	0	
General admin costs		1000
handbooks	0	0
other		500
Adult team indoor fees	1250	
admin		500
pitch hire		750
officials		750

### Junior Leagues and Competitions

Junior league & Competition entry fees	3000	
Administration		1000
finals inc trophies		1500
Junior Indoor fees	1250	
admin		500
pitch hire		750
officials		500

### Player Pathway

Player pathway (2 Performance Centres)		
Players fees	55,000	
Facility hire		13000
Coaches / Managers		33000
Equipment / Administration / Officials		9000

### Umpires and technical officials

Membership Subs	3750	
Appointment Fees - Appointments	23760	
Appointment Fees - Expenses		23760
Development (Coaches / Assessors / Member Evenings)		2550
Administration (including IT and Radios)		1200

### Masters representative teams

Masters Match/Tournament Fees - 1 overnight stay	12800	
Pitch Hire - Training for 8 squads		2080
Kit		500
Umpiring		500
Travel / Accommodation Contribution		9600

## Sub-Area Budget

Income	Expenditure	Net Profit (Loss)
24360	24100	260

	Income	Expenditure
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### Governance

Affiliation fees (x80 teams)	1200	
IT		250
expenses		200
meetings/travel		200
insurance		250
audit/accounting		250

### Player Pathway

Players fees (Adademy Centre)	16,200	
Players fees (Development Centre)	6000	
Facility hire		6000
Coaches / Managers		12000
Equipment / Administration / Officials		4000

### Masters representative teams

Masters Match/Tournament Fees - No overnight stay	960	
Pitch Hire - Training for 4 squads		500
Kit		250
Travel Contribution / Entry Fees		200



## **Volunteer Retention and Recruitment**

The risk of losing volunteers through the changes is real and recognised. Hockey has an outstanding voluntary workforce at all levels and the sport would not function without everyone who contributes, in large and small ways, to the game every week. Being careful through the process to retain and support those that want to continue while introducing changes that will encourage new volunteers will be key.

The nature of volunteering is fundamentally changing across both sport and the voluntary sector. Leisure time is squeezed by longer working hours, busier lives in general and more choice of things to do that is leaving sports volunteering operating in a different context. Volunteering tends to be more 'episodic' task based in nature rather than people making immediate commitments to large, time consuming and long-term roles. There is a shift towards the use for technology amongst younger age groups as the recent shift into clubs using online club management systems demonstrates. Finally, there has been a rise in small scale paid roles in organisations, initially seen with coaching but now fairly common in some administrative roles either for incentives (e.g. reduced membership) or paid roles (largely small to medium sized sums of hundreds to a few thousand pounds).

Many Counties, but particularly Regions, have enjoyed a more consistent volunteer base for many years. This has proved to be a strength in terms of consistency of decision making and policy but has proved a weakness in terms of succession planning and volunteer recruitment. The feedback references this and in some cases there is now a cultural gap in administration and meeting practices between the organisations and the bodies they represent.

The proposed changes will result in significantly fewer organisations at around half of the number we have now. This would mean at least 50 separately constituted organisations and as many as 150 committees. Therefore, the need for fewer voluntary roles is likely and the consolidation of bodies offers the opportunity to make better use of volunteer time. No newly created organisation will be larger than some other bodies that are already in existence in other parts of the country. The current Midlands, West and East Areas will be similar in size to the current existing Regions in that area.

Many clubs, and some organisations, are already using more modern forms of meeting practices to attract and engage volunteers. Online meetings and conference calls should be adopted by the new Areas and Sub-Areas to ensure the best use of volunteer time and encourage the next generation of administrators.

The consultation asked if respondents were interested in supporting the new bodies and what range of skills were available if required. There was a clear indication of interest from club respondents to the survey (18% 'yes' and 51% 'maybe') which is a promising sign but within the verbatim responses there is clear recognition that working practices of the new bodies was important to the appetite to volunteer for club respondents.

England Hockey will commit to lead on providing leadership in this area through the creation of promotional material, tools and training for volunteers as well as supporting the transition process locally to the new bodies.

## Risk Management

This is a significant proposal for change and therefore there are inherent risks. The Working Group leading the project has developed a full risk log but the main risks are seen to be as follows with supporting mitigations. These will continue to be monitored and managed throughout the change process.

- Failure to implement the overall plan given historical change management exercises and perceived negativity associated with previous changes such as the Single System (Player Pathway). England Hockey needs to demonstrate credibility in the next stages of communication and show commitment to the programme of change.
- Incomplete league structures in place for 2021/22. This is relatively low risk if enough league administrators are retained and there is time to recruit if necessary.
- Failure to identify technology solutions that simplify administration. Some of these are partially in place already but IT solutions usually take more time to deliver than expected. There is sufficient time to progress these at a satisfactory speed as long as there is enough financial and resource commitment made by England Hockey soon after the AGM in March 2020.
- Communications plan poor and failing to keep everyone informed and engaged. This is a challenge given the number of organisations and nebulous nature of some club and association committees. More resource will be allocated by England Hockey to this over coming months until plans are sufficiently embedded.
- England Hockey resources insufficient to drive through project. A detailed resource planner is in place with all the necessary detail in terms of implications for England Hockey staff. The knock-on effects of this will be assessed on an ongoing basis but this change will stay a high priority for England Hockey until delivered.
- The timing of elements of the plan are not aligned to needs of the sport - either too quick, and hence stakeholders not fully bought in, or too slow and hence lose the impetus. By staging the implementation plan as proposed it should allow for delivery to reasonable timescales for the bodies involved.
- The volunteer community at County and Regional level is not retained and therefore there is not sufficient capacity/expertise to run the various organisations. From the consultations so far the main concerns are limited to a few areas of the country where change is more significant and committees have traditionally seen less turnover.



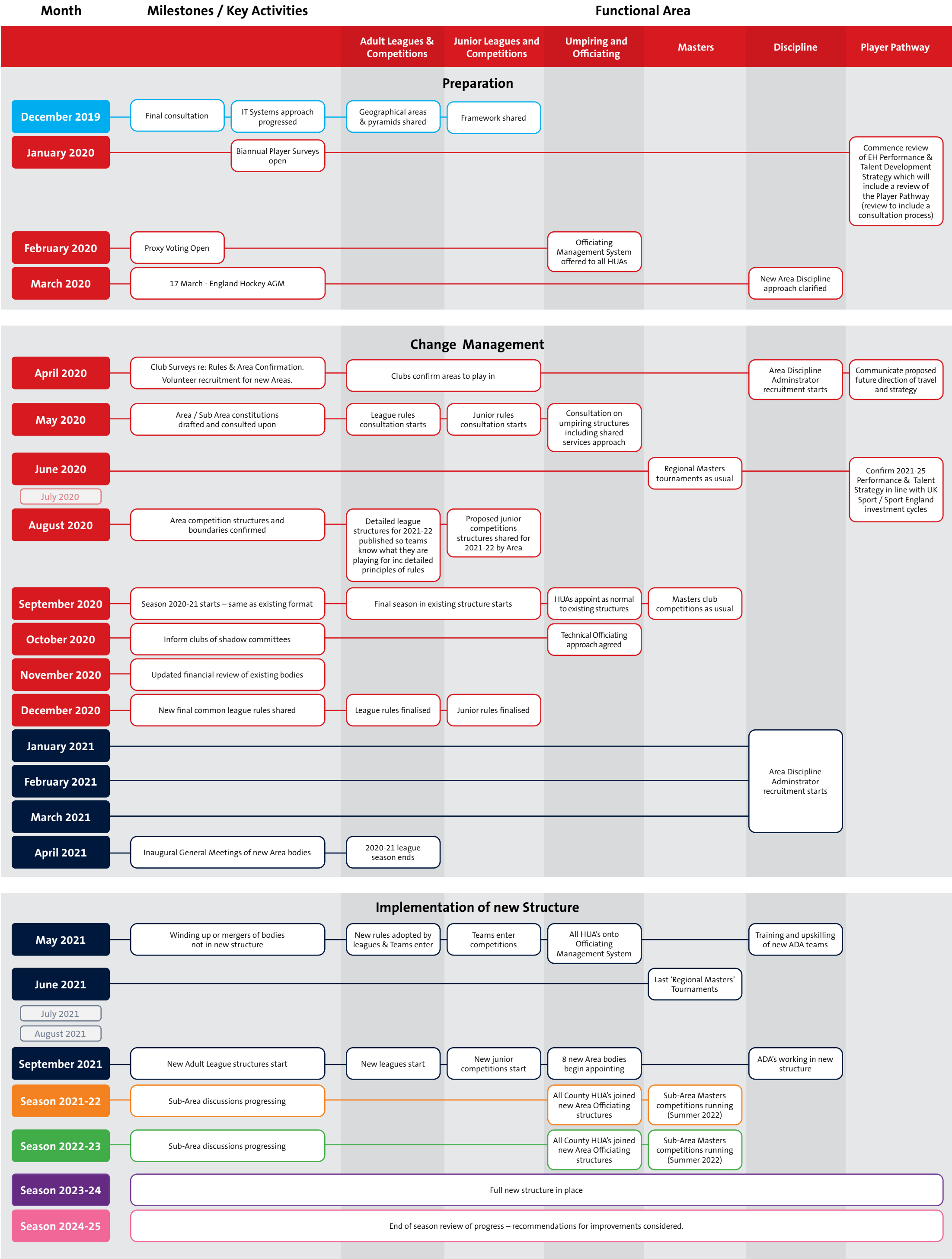
# Timeline for change

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8. Timeline for change



# Future Proofing



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## 9. Future Proofing

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The proposal aims to make the organisation of hockey fit for the future. This can be considered from a number of aspects and perspectives. The main headlines that we have received feedback upon are as follows:

**Travel time / cost** – A more local structure will be well received by many clubs wherever possible, particularly at lower team levels. Clubs also expressed concerns about travel costs rising over time and liked the benefits of fewer miles for hockey players in both cost terms and the ‘green credentials’ of the proposal.

**Governance structure** – the streamlined governance structure will create a sport that is more capable to adapt and change as circumstances change. This includes the ability to react to growth or shrinkage in player and team numbers without the complexity that the current structure provides.

**Economies of scale in delivery** should be possible with better use of voluntary time and the potential to affordably create small/medium size paid roles if required. This is commonplace in many organisations already and should be able to be more consistently achieved. Given the changing nature of volunteering many sports are taking similar steps.

England Hockey commits to review the changes in 2025 to ensure that any learnings and improvements can be made after the first three seasons in the new structure.



# Outside of Scope



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## 10. Outside of Scope

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To reiterate, a number of areas were out of scope in the initial proposal. These are as follows and a short update on these is provided.

Schools - schools hockey was outside the scope of the review but England Hockey has continued to work with key leadership bodies in the schools sector to discuss the approach to supporting schools provision. In 2016 England Hockey also changed the schools competition structure to encourage and broaden the appeal of England Hockey competitions to schools. More detail is in Appendix 1.

'Wednesday University teams' - again whilst outside the scope of the review, England Hockey already works closely with British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) that provide the University competition. All Universities that play hockey (Weekend or Wednesday or both) are affiliated to England Hockey to ensure that the appropriate structures are in place to manage any issues.

Reviewing or changing the Player Pathway was not in the scope of the proposals with the exception of considering the governance implications.

The Elite Domestic Game (i.e. Top levels of the England Hockey Leagues) is outside the scope of the project and is led by an England Hockey Committee (the Elite Domestic Game Panel) which is made up of club representatives from the highest levels of the game.

The governance of England Hockey was outside the scope of the review and is independently assessed via a number of processes led by Sport England and UK Sport aligned to the sports code of good governance [www.sportengland.org/about-us/governance/a-code-for-sports-governance](http://www.sportengland.org/about-us/governance/a-code-for-sports-governance).



# The AGM



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## 11. The AGM

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All affiliated clubs and member associations will be able to vote in the England Hockey AGM on 17 March 2020. Voting forms and processes will be sent out to the primary contacts at each body in early February. In the event of any uncertainty, to confirm your organisations arrangements please email [agm.resolution@englandhockey.co.uk](mailto:agm.resolution@englandhockey.co.uk).

All bodies will be able to vote electronically so it is not necessary to attend the AGM to vote.

England Hockey strongly recommends all clubs to cast a vote given the importance of these proposals to the future of the game.





# Appendix 1



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# Appendix 1

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## Schools

Whilst schools are out of scope there have been questions about schools hockey provision so an update is provided here.

There has been a move to more nationally centrally run schools' competitions in recent seasons in line with the Competitions Review undertaken in 2016. This is for high performing and higher level intermediate Schools at older age groups.

This has given the opportunity for additional lower level activity at older age groups and younger age group activity to be run locally i.e. at local, County and Regional level. These Championships are as follows. In future where these lead to national finals having eight Area qualifiers is the ideal approach.

The following Championships are nationally organised

- Investec Girls' and Notts Sport Boys' U18 Tier 1 Schools Championships
- Investec Girls' and Notts Sport Boys' U18 Tier 2 & Tier 3 Schools Championships
- Investec Girls' and Notts Sport Boys' U16 Tier 1 & Tier 2 Schools Championships (U18 Tier 3 and U16 Tier 2 are Plate competitions for early round losers)

In addition to the above, the following Championships are organised locally within a County or Region and which, where highlighted\*, lead to National finals.

- Investec Girls' and Notts Sport Boys' U18 Tier 4\* Schools Championships
- Investec Girls' and Notts Sport Boys' U16 Tier 3\* Schools Championships
- Investec Girls' and Notts Sport Boys' U14 Tier 1\*, Tier 2\* & Tier 3 Schools Championships
- Boys and Girls In2Hockey Boys' and Girls' U13 Tier 1\*. U12 Tier 2 and U11 Tier 1 Schools Championships

In 2016 and 2017 England Hockey consulted with clubs and schools about its annual programme of competitions. You can see more details of that consultation [here](#).

- One of the most heard messages was the need to provide appropriate competition depending on a team's ability. This is particularly relevant to our schools' competitions where, up until 2018/19, all schools entered the same level of competition whatever their level of hockey activity or ability.
- England Hockey had successfully introduced tiered Championships for clubs (adults, masters and juniors) in the 2017/18 season. In 2018/19 we introduced tiered Schools Championships.

- The competitions offer includes ones based on the traditional County competitions, leading to Regional and National finals, knockout competitions and, at U18 level, a two-term league for high performing schools specialising in hockey.

Schools are categorised as follows:

- a. High performing schools
- b. Intermediate schools
- c. Emerging schools

**Please note:** All competitions are 11-a-side unless shown.

### **U18 Tier 1 (High Performing Schools)**

The chance for high performing hockey schools to specialise at this age group. Participating schools to play each other in elite leagues with knockout stages leading to a grand final.

Four (three for Boys in 2019-20) Area Premier Leagues of up to eight teams per League. Top teams qualify for knockout stages & national final.

### **U18 Tier 2 (High Performing & Intermediate Schools); U16 Tier 1 (High Performing & Intermediate Schools)**

The excitement of a knockout competition leading to a final. A national knockout competition – teams are drawn locally in early rounds within four areas leading to national quarter finals, semis and final.

Early Round losers are automatically entered for a Plate competition (these are the U18 Tier 3 and U16 Tier 2 Championships).

### **U18 Tier 4 (Intermediate & Emerging Schools); U16 Tier 3 (Intermediate & Emerging Schools); U14 Tier 1 (High Performing & Intermediate Schools)**

Hockey's traditional competition format. Progression via different stages - one day or half day round robin events with short games at County level leading to Regional and then National rounds. Run by County and Regional Associations.

## **U14 Tier 2 (Intermediate Schools)**

Hockey's traditional competition format. Progression via different stages - one day or half day round robin events with short games at County level leading to Regional and then National rounds. A second Tier to offer more appropriate competition for less strong schools. Run by County and Regional Associations.

## **U16 T4, U14 Tier 3 (Emerging Schools)**

A new seven-a-side competition. Aimed at Emerging Schools who have not previously played in County Schools tournaments or struggled to compete at that level.

Progression via two different stages – one or half day round robin events – at a local level leading to Area finals

Run and stimulated by Area Championships Coordinators

## **U13 Tier 1 (High Performing & Intermediate Schools); U11 Tier 1 (High Performing & Intermediate Schools)**

Hockey's traditional competition format – In2Hockey. County and Regional round robin competitions. Seven-a-side. Similar to existing Schools Championships format including national finals at U13 only.

## **U12 Tier 2 (Intermediate & Emerging Schools)**

Hockey's traditional competition format – In2Hockey. County and Regional round robin competitions. Seven-a-side. Similar to existing Schools Championships format.

### **Definitions of Schools**

#### ***High Performing Schools.***

Specialise in hockey and qualify regularly for national finals of England Hockey age group competitions and challenge for titles. They regularly develop a number of players who play for England age group teams.

#### ***Intermediate Schools.***

Traditional hockey playing schools which compete in existing County and Regional age group competitions and occasionally qualify for national stages. May develop players who plays for England age group teams.

#### ***Emerging Schools.***

Schools who play some local hockey but do not compete, or find it hard to compete, at existing County level age group competitions.



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