

LONDON & SOUTH EAST REGION
Regional Management Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting held via Zoom
 7pm on Wednesday 23 February 2022

Present:

Alison Bennett	Regional Chair	AB	
Marlene Wander	Regional Vice Chair	MW	
Julia Martin	Regional Treasurer	JM	
Jessica Vine	Regional Secretary	JV	
Amy Jacobs	Communications Officer	AJ	
Jane Kelloe	Officiating TSG Chair	JK	
Maggie Finch	Coaching and Performance TSG Chair	MF	
Katrina-May Kwan	Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity Officer	KMK	
Laura Pawley	Competitions TSG Chair	LPa	(from item 5h)
Lucy Pollock	Young Volunteer Representative	LPo	
Pat Meadows	Essex Met CNA Chair	PM	
Keeley Smith	Kent CNA Chair	KS	
Christine Kelso	Surrey CNA Chair	CK	

In attendance:

Philippa Hicks	Partnership Manager, East and London & South East	PH
Lucy Goodman	Regional Coordinator, London & South East	LG

Apologies (Members):

Jenny Harold (JH), Regional President
 Sue Owen (SO), Middlesex CNA Chair

Acronyms

RMB	Regional Management Board	ToR	Terms of Reference
TSG	Technical Support Group	EDI	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion
WG	Working Group	EN	England Netball
C&P	Coaching & Performance	NDO	Netball Development Officer
LSE	London & South East	CNA	County Netball Association
TMG	Talent Management Group		

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted as set out above. It was also noted that LPa would be late to the meeting due to another commitment.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Standing interests were noted as follows:

- JK - Director of Redbridge Leisure Centre and an Officiating Portfolio Manager of Netball Europe.
- JK and KMK – sitting on a London Pulse diversity sub-committee (in relation to officiating).

3. AGREEMENT OF THE MINUTES AND ACTIONS OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- a) **MINUTES:** The minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2021 were approved by the Board.

b) **ACTIONS:** An update on actions was noted as follows:

Actions from last meeting (17th November 2021)
<p>039: <i>AB to take forward concerns about officiating requirements for the National Schools competition.</i> AB confirmed that the concerns raised by other Board Members had been fed back to EN and she added that Counties also had a role to ensure that their tournaments had suitably qualified officials. AB noted that there was a review of the National Schools competition, which meant that, in future, arrangements might change. Action closed</p>
<p>040: <i>SO to provide an update on academy plans for Middlesex and AB/LP to provide an update on the implications for the Regional Festival.</i> AB explained that she had discussed the plans for Middlesex with SO. EN had also been involved, because complaints had been received from some parents about the lack of academy provision. It was noted that there had been some difficulty in setting this up in 2021-22, but that, as set out in SO's report, academy sessions were now planned for the summer in Middlesex. Action closed</p>
<p>041: <i>PH to examine whether there was a single factor affecting the differing levels of junior membership across the counties.</i> It was noted that this issue would be discussed under item 5h. Action closed</p>
<p>042: <i>AB to take forward comments on the length of the officiating process.</i> AB explained that she had taken forward these comments at the same time as comments at action 39. She was not aware of any immediate changes which were forthcoming, but agreed that it was important to continue to provide this feedback. It was also noted that a number of assessments had recently taken place across the counties, which was good news, and that this could be further discussed under item 5b. Action closed</p>
Ongoing actions from previous meetings
<p>011: <i>LG to follow up with Board Members who had not yet submitted an Information Asset Register</i> LG explained that the register had now been completed and that she would share with with JK and JV to review. Action 043 LG to share Asset Register with JK and JV for review.</p>
<p>025: <i>PH to update the RMB on including EDI elements in all training sessions.</i> PH explained how EDI would be central to the new EN Strategy and reminded Board Members about the new online EDI training which had been launched recently. There was an expectation that all areas of EN's work would include an awareness of EDI issues. It was noted that the new Head of Coaching (Chris Cushion) had been reviewing the coaching courses. Briefing sessions on this, for coaching tutors, would be offered in the coming weeks. AB welcomed this news and noted that the Region's EDI Working Group would continue to monitor these issues. Action closed</p>
<p>031: <i>KS to share details of the Kent Youth Representative with LPo.</i> AB noted that this was covered under item 6. Action closed</p>
<p>036: <i>AB/LG to develop/review the roles of Resolution Lead and Volunteering Lead.</i> AB explained that she had been working with LG to develop a role description for the Regional</p>

Volunteering Lead role. In relation to the Resolution Lead, LG explained that EN's new Governance Manager was finalising the governance toolkit, which should include a template role description for this particular role. It was noted that board vacancies would also be discussed under item 7.

Action closed

037: PH to share Community Coach advert with RMB members for wider circulation.

It was noted that this had been put on hold initially, whilst a consultation process took place, and that there were current NDO vacancies in Kent and in Essex Met. PH explained that the adverts for these roles would now be launched in March, with recruitment taking place in April and March. A netball development community coach role for children and young people was also being considered as a pilot, but details of this had not yet been finalised.

Action 037 carried forward

4. REGIONAL CHAIR'S UPDATE

AB's report included updates on: the return to netball activity across the Region; the roll-out of EN's new Adventure Strategy; the current regional EN vacancies; and the Conscious Inclusion (EDI) training.

5. TSG AND WG UPDATES

a. Finance

JM had submitted a balance sheet as at 31 January 2022 as part of the meeting papers. She explained that she had since created a more up-to-date balance sheet and she provided the latest figures. The accounts were currently in a good position. It was noted that, as agreed at the last meeting, there were now additional costs for the Officiating TSG, in relation to the new approach to umpiring fees.

In relation to bursary and grant requests, JM explained that she was putting together guidance to support this process. However, since the last meeting, one request for financial support had been received. JM had discussed this request with AB, LG and the Finance TSG. It was suggested that this request be considered on an individual basis (rather than setting a precedent at this stage). AB provided further details about the request and the context, as set out within the confidential annex. The RMB was asked to consider meeting one third of the costs requested, noting that Kent County had also agreed to meet one third of the costs. The Board **agreed** to endorse this approach.

JM explained that she had reviewed the general coaching and umpiring expenses sheet for the next season and that, subject to confirmation from the Officiating TSG and the Competition TSG that no changes were required, these expenses would remain the same.

AB thanked JM for resolving the anomaly in relation to umpiring and mentoring fees, noting that this had been very well received by the umpires.

Action 44 – JM to arrange grant payment for the applicant, as set out within the confidential annex (making contact with Kent County, as necessary)

b. Officiating

JK introduced the Officiating report, which provided updates on assessments, courses and the allocation of umpires for the regional league, the National Schools regional round, and for London Pulse. JK provided a verbal update on the most recent assessments scheduled for A and B awards. She also explained that one of the ENgage issues (set out within her report) now appeared to have been resolved.

The Board discussed the issue of fees and expenses for officiating on behalf of franchises. It was noted

that discussions on this matter were ongoing.

JK asked the Board to approve that regional badges be given to each successful B award umpire (as per previous practice). The Board **endorsed** this proposal. The Board discussed the recommended regional rates for A, B and C award umpires, noting that some clubs chose to pay above these rates, but as this was a question of supply and demand, it was very difficult to regulate the fees paid.

Action 45 – JK to arrange for badges to be given to B award umpires.

c. Communications

AJ presented the Communications report, which provided updates on: events of note during the most recent quarter; the awareness and engagement KPIs; and how each of the Region's social media platforms had performed during the period. AB thanked her for her informative report.

d. Coaching and Performance

MF's report on Performance and Coaching provided updates on: the academy programmes and the Regional Festival; EN's Player Pathway improvement consultations; and TMG meetings with the franchises.

MF asked about the fees for the Regional Festival and JK explained that the recommended rate for a full-day event was £60. Expenses were not normally provided for these events. MF explained that she had been able to gauge the number of teams likely to enter the tournament and that it was likely that one age group would compete in the morning and another would compete in the afternoon. The tournament was expected to go ahead and further details would be sent out as soon as possible.

e. Young Volunteer

LPO's report provided an overview of the work of the Young Volunteer WG, including a Kit Recycling Initiative. In relation to the proposals for a sustainability-related project (previously reported on), LPO explained that further work on this was due to commence shortly and she would keep the board updated on developments. LG added that this was likely to remain a regional project, rather than a national project, which meant that the Region could take action more speedily.

f. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

KMK provided a verbal update on the EDI WG. She explained that, now that the new EN strategy had been launched, with its associated EDI priorities, the WG would need to examine how the Region responded and what its future EDI goals would be.

LG provided an update on the Beyond the Court initiative which had launched in January and had been very successful, encouraging the engagement of young women and girls with netball activity and with the Met Police. Other police forces were now interested in taking forward this approach and LG explained how she had been approached by other organisations with an interest in the project (as set out in the annex). She thanked the RMB, and AB and CK in particular, for their support of this initiative. AB commented that she had attended the launch event and it had been a fantastic day. She thanked LG for all her work on this project. AB explained that this work could feed into the Region's future strategic plans, for example, to encourage young people's engagement in coaching and officiating, which could help with their leadership skills. (AB explained that further information about the roll-out of the regional strategy was expected in the coming weeks.)

LG explained that there was also a proposal to create 'ambassador' roles, for the initial cohort of Beyond the Court attendees, and that she would contact KMK and LPO at the appropriate point about continuing engagement with these individuals. In response to a question, LG explained that, whilst the pilot had started as a regional project, this initiative (now sponsored by Nike) had since gained national backing from EN, and other regions were now interested in rolling this out. The Board discussed how the Region could better publicise its role in such projects, and how to promote the work of the RMB, its TSGs and

WGs in general. AJ suggested that this could form part of a future Communications Strategy, linked to the overall Regional Strategy and to the objectives of each TSG and WG, once these had been developed. AB explained that one of the pillars of the new Adventure Strategy was to be 'storytelling' and agreed that it would be important for RMB members to be actively involved in this and the regional strategy development. It was envisaged that, if the strategy was to be rolled out in a similar way as before, then RMB members would be invited to join strategy roadshows as the first step in the process.

g. Competition

LP had submitted a written report which included updates on: the senior and under-16 regional leagues; the National Schools Competition; the Regional Festival; the TSG Regional Competition Chairs Meeting; and the competition calendar for the next year. *[LPa provided a verbal update on the Regional Festival under AOB.]*

h. EN Update

The Board considered the EN report, produced by LG and PH, which provided an update on national issues, regional rebuilding work, regional membership and participation levels, learning and development, partnerships, and key upcoming dates.

AB commented that she was very impressed with the latest membership numbers for the region. In response to a question, it was reported that the national membership targets for the year had also been exceeded, so the picture in other regions was likely to be similarly positive. PH commented that the return of leagues, clubs and members in the L&SE region was very encouraging and, for two of the counties, the membership numbers were in excess of that of the 2019-20 season.

In relation to the differing number of junior members in each county, PH explained that there was no obvious reason for this, but there would be an opportunity to examine this in more detail when the new NDO roles were filled. PH explained that the issue may not be a question of participation, but of affiliation. She suggested that, if counties were concerned that leagues, groups or clubs may be operating without EN affiliation, or if there were unexplained disparities in the numbers, then the County representatives could contact their NDOs or PH and LG for assistance to look into this. The RMB discussed whether league managers were comfortable with the ENgage system and how to check affiliations. As well as making these checks, the counties and their NDOs could also examine the number of opportunities on offer for junior players, to see whether these differed across each county. PH explained that, as part of the future strategy roll-out, the regions and counties would be asked to consider what data they required from EN and ENgage, in order to set their priorities and to measure their achievements.

A County Chair raised an issue about membership and other items sometimes being stuck in the payment basket on the ENgage system. The RMB discussed whether the system could be set to send an automatic reminder on a regular basis to anyone with unpaid items in their baskets.

PH thanked LG and her EN team colleagues for covering the NDO vacancies in the short term. She explained that the recent months had had some challenges, due to staff vacancies and the difficulties in returning to netball activity as the country emerged from the pandemic. Areas to work on were the WI and Walking Netball activities, and Bee Netball, which had been slower to return. Participation numbers for these activities were still relatively low, but an increase in activity was expected as the season progressed.

CK commented that Walking Netball sessions were being held in Surrey, but did not appear to be captured within the official data. PH explained that many of these activities were reliant on partnership agreements, and that the information that was shared with EN was dependent on active agreements being in place. In some cases, it may be that the agreement had lapsed, and that relationships should be re-established.

The Board discussed the CAPS accreditation system, which was on hold whilst the process was being refreshed. PH asked that counties and league managers accommodate this transition period within their entry rules, i.e. to note that the accreditation of some clubs may lapse through no fault of the club. However, the new process was expected to be much more efficient, which meant that clubs would be able to be accredited more quickly in the future. It was noted that communications on this would be sent out as soon as possible.

Action 46 – County Chairs to further examine the issue of junior membership numbers with their NDOs, when all are in place.

Action 47 - County Chairs to flag if there are any concerns about large numbers of unaffiliated clubs or players and to check with their leagues whether further training on ENgage is required. If yes, league managers should be put in contact with NDOs/PH.

Action 48 – PH/LG to take forward the suggestion about automatic reminders for the basket in the ENgage system.

Action 49 – County Chairs to contact their NDO or PH/LG if they are aware of any Walking Netball activity which might benefit from (re)establishing a partnership agreement with EN.

6. COUNTY UPDATES

The Board had received written updates from Essex Met, Kent, Middlesex and Surrey CNAs, which set out what netball activity had been taking place in each county. In addition, PM provided a verbal update on recent umpiring passes, since the report had been circulated. It was noted that the indoor court at Redbridge had now been reopened.

The RMB discussed some of the challenges faced by leagues and volunteers as part of the return to netball activity, as raised by one County Chair, who explained that there had been a very high workload in recent months. LG explained that a new volunteer recognition event (to replace the Golden Globes) would be launched by EN in the near future, in order to highlight the importance of the volunteering role in netball, and how valued these individuals were.

7. RMB Vacancies

AB explained that there was still a vacancy for the Volunteering TSG Chair/ Volunteer Lead role, and that it was important to fill this soon, given the launch of the new volunteer recognition event. LG explained how she had drafted a new role description, with reference to the themes of the new EN strategy. She proposed carrying out an external recruitment exercise, with the aim of attracting an events-specialist to the role. She would work with AB to finalise the role description and then with AJ to publicise the vacancy. AB asked RMB Members to refer anyone with the right skills and background. LPo added that one of the Young Volunteer WG members might be interested in this role or in joining the Volunteering TSG.

In reference to the Resolution Officer role, AB explained that this was a very specialist role, and required an individual who had undertaken the relevant training. The RMB was awaiting the new template role description from EN, prior to making an appointment to this role.

AB explained that JH had announced that she would be standing down as Regional President in 2022 and that the Board would need to think about the requirements of this role, in the future, linking this to the new strategy. The Board discussed the Regional President role, and AB agreed to look at the role description for the EN President as a template, in the first instance. Members discussed how, in addition to chairing the AGM, the President could have a role in presenting awards and prizes (e.g. at the Regional Festival) and could act as a public ambassador and advocate for netball in the L&SE Region. AB asked Members to consider whether any current contacts might be well-placed to perform this role. The role would also be advertised and nominations would be sought.

AB announced that, sadly, MF would be standing down as Coaching and Performance TSG Chair this year. She had asked MF to ascertain whether any existing TSG members wished to take on the role of

the Chair. Members were also asked to refer any suitable candidates for this role, if none of the existing members wished to become the Chair.

Action 50 – **LG** and **AB** to finalise the Role Description for the Volunteering TSG Chair/ Volunteer Lead role and to launch a recruitment exercise with input from **AJ** (to coincide with announcements about the new volunteering awards/event).

Action 51 - **LPO** to share details of the Young Volunteer (referred to above) with LG.

Action 52 – **AB** to create a new draft Role Description for the President role, incorporating the comments above and the constitutional requirements (and looking at the EN President role as a template) - for discussion at the next meeting.

Action 53 - **MF/AB** to update the Board on the Coaching and Performance TSG Chair role at the next meeting, and **All** to contact AB with any referrals for existing or forthcoming vacancies.

8. AOB

a. Regional Festival

LPA explained that this would be discussed further at the TSG meeting on Monday. In summary, the festival would be going ahead and MF had provided an estimate of academy numbers. The event would take place at Rainham and further details would be sent out in the coming weeks. It was noted that 'save the date' information had already been circulated.

b. EDI Training

AB encouraged all Members to carry out EN's new online EDI training, which could be accessed via the 'Virtual Netball Club.' The RMB discussed the uptake of training and noted that there was currently no system for monitoring this, although this was something that may be introduced for future training programmes.

c. Volunteering Celebration Events

AB encouraged all Counties to think about volunteer recognition, in preparation for the re-launch of the Golden Globes (which would be renamed). It was noted that the nomination process would be online in future and that some of the categories may change. The regional event was expected to take place in the summer with the national event taking place in the autumn.

d. Coaching Opportunity

PM referred to a coaching opportunity in Tottenham. It was suggested that she refer this to SO.

e. Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be held at **6.30pm on Wednesday 18 May 2022** at the House of Sport (with the option of joining via Zoom for those unable to attend in person).

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.

Signed

Date.....

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