

Annual General Meeting for 2018-19

Responses to questions submitted by the Associate Membership

7 November 2020

Overview

We would like to thank all the Associate Members who took the time to submit questions, before and after the Para Dance UK annual general meeting (AGM), held on 7 November 2020 for the financial year 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019.

There was a total of 43 questions received from 6 associate members to which responses have been provided in this document.

While we have documented the questions as they were written to us, a few questions have been edited for length, in order to allow us to meet the needs of our diverse audience. Questions on the same topic have been grouped together to provide a single response.

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1. Governance and how we make decisions

1.1: Trustee recruitment and retention – two questions:

First question:

Would the Chair please comment on the reason and impact of high level of turnover of trustees (and by definition of the Memorandum and Articles, directors) in particular in the year immediately prior to the year being reviewed 2018-2019 on the forward strategy of the organisation both as a charity and a National Governing Body. Is there any specific reason for this?

Second question:

Would the chairperson provide information on whether the Trustee board will be reviewing its' strategy, concerning recruiting, retaining and having a fixed term policy of appointment?

1.1 response:

Recruitment and selection: We have just reviewed our trustee recruitment policy before advertising for new trustees in summer 2020. This included a refreshed approach to advertising, recruiting, selecting, and onboarding trustees.

Before deciding to recruit new trustees, we review the skills of our board and management team to identify any skills that we may need to supplement. We then review the job description and advertise accordingly. A panel made up of current trustees, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and senior officers shortlist and make selections based on a review of applicant CV and interview performance against clear criteria.

Our Memorandum of Articles (MOA) does not specify any minimum/maximum terms for trustees, however we are seeking to make amendments to the MOA in due course to specify a maximum term for our Trustees. The best practice is 3 terms of 3 years (9 years consecutively) which is what we too are considering.

Our longest-serving trustee as of November 2020 was Roberta Beaton at 3 years 11 months (she was confirmed in December 2016).

Retention: Sadly, we have had trustees step down for several personal reasons over the past 3 years. The main reasons provided were ill health, retirement, relocating abroad, lack of time, change of circumstances such as different day job, and increasing family commitments.

It is always our endeavour to have Trustees commit to us for longer periods; however, given the voluntary nature of their involvement, we have to respect and appreciate the time they have given us and their right to resign.

As a practice we hold exit interviews with each of the trustees to obtain their feedback and suggestions for improvements. We also seek to utilise their experience and extend their service to the charity in areas that offer a more flexible commitment.

Of the seven trustees who resigned in the 2018-2019 period, four have taken on a different role and are still involved with the charity. Patrick McGeough our CEO, who stepped down as a trustee on 30 November 2019 to ensure that our decision making between the Board and the Senior

Management Team was independent. Although the Charity Commission had no objections to his dual role as CEO and Trustee, we took action to separate the roles as a matter of good governance and best practice.

Despite this turnover, we have always been able to achieve a quorum to pass decisions in line with our MOA and have continuously maintained stability in our decision making, as we have a core group of trustees who are familiar with the charity and can support new trustees coming onto the board.

Our Senior Management Team has remained unchanged over the period. The key knowledge and skills to run PD-UK has stayed constant and this helped limit any impact of rotating trustees.

1.2: Number of trustees - two questions:

First question:

PD-UK governing document states that the maximum number of trustees is 8. The AGM paperwork states that you have 9 trustees and a board secretary. This is a direct violation of the Constitution which states a maximum of 8 Trustees at any one time. May we ask who is to immediately resign to ensure the Board of Trustees meets the stipulation of our constitution.

Second question:

Would the chairperson of the board kindly explain the variance in the registered number or Trustees as per the Charity Commission Website on 28.10.2020 at 16:00 and the Companies House register of Directors declared for Para Dance UK in comparison with the list provided in the AGM Agenda papers circulated to all membership on 13.10.2020.

[This question was slightly edited for length – removing a pasted list from the AGM agenda]

1.2 response: The AGM paperwork shared with the Members notes that there are 5 registered trustees and 4 trustees which are designated as ‘onboarding’.

The 5 trustees who currently sit on our Board of Trustees are registered with both the Charity Commission and Companies House. They are the decision makers for the charity (i.e. they have voting rights at Board meetings).

The 4 trustees designated as ‘onboarding’ have been selected as potential Trustees during our recruitment drive in the summer of 2020, and are undergoing our 3 month induction process where they get to meet people within the charity, as well as understand our requirements of them and their time commitments; while we gain a better understanding of their suitability and fitment.

During the induction process, ‘onboarding trustees’ are not formal trustees, in the sense that they have not been confirmed onto the Board and are not registered with the Charity’s Commission or Companies House.

Our past experience has shown that when potential trustees go through the induction process, they sometimes find that they cannot commit to the time needed to be a trustee and decide to withdraw or seek to support in another capacity. Onboarding is an opportunity for people to withdraw before

we make registrations with Charity Commission and Companies House. This is before they have legal responsibilities for PD-UK under charity and companies' law.

As anticipated, Cameron Penny, one of the potential trustees undergoing the onboarding induction process has decided to take a different role within PD-UK with a more flexible time commitment.

We have now confirmed Catherine Woolfe, Eddie Longworth, and Richard Barlow as new trustees. They join Roberta Beaton, Sharon Bairstow, Dana Lapidot, Robert Lewinton and Sarah Preston, which rounds up our trustees to 8 as specified in our governing document.

Julia Eacott is our Board Secretary; she is not a trustee but voluntarily provides services which support the PU-UK Board to be effective.

1.3: Trustee skills: It's noted that declarations of occupations currently shown publicly confirm that there is professional expertise in the areas of strategic performance, finance, and marketing. Would the board please comment where the professional qualification and expertise in both Para Dance Sport and Para Sports is being drawn for, particularly as the organisation is identified as the National Governing Body (NGB)?

1.3 response: PD-UK has a wealth of expertise in its Board which is underpinned by the support from our Ambassadors, Advisors, Patrons and Management Team.

Knowledge and experience about Para Dance Sport and Para Sports are drawn from our Management Team, a mix of Advisors who work with us, collaboration with other NGBs and partnerships with other organisations. For example:

- Our Management Team and Staff which includes Patrick McGeough, Emma Millward, Lin McGeough, Selina Johnson, Claire Tracey Samantha Parry, Keith Wilding and Victoria Heales has a wealth of experience in wheelchair dance, inclusive dance and Para Dance Sport and other key areas around supporting Para Dance UK activities.
- We work with our international partners such as the World Para Dance Sport International Body.
- In the UK we utilise the wealth of experience and knowledge in Dance Sport from our advisors - Vera Randall-Noyce, Louise Sampson, Sue Passmore, Christa Udell, Paul Killock, and Gary Edwards – to name a few.
- We work with other NGBs at the national level to draw on knowledge of Para Sport activity through Sport England and British Paralympic Association, and continue to build and engage partners such as the British Dance Council, Sport and Recreation Alliance, and Exercise Movement and Dance UK to share the experience.
- We regularly survey our competitors & instructors, and endeavour to actively engage with the National Representative to seek inputs and feedback on what they would like to see happen in this sport.

1.4: Cancelled AGM in 2018 – four questions:

First question:

- **You are incorrect stating the last AGM was 2018. There was no AGM in 2018 as the forum meeting was cancelled supposedly as there was no quorum. The quorum is simply 3 trustees (Clause 15 C i), so this seems odd given 3 Trustees were in attendance at Ware during the National Championship.**
- **The reason quoted for not having an AGM/Forum in 2019 is not valid. A meeting should still have been called later in the year following the financial year end - there is no stipulation this has to be in conjunction with the National Championships.**
- **As such there has been no Forum/AGM for 2018 and 2019 which is in direct contravention of the constitution (Clause 15 A iv) which states a forum meeting is to be held annually.**

Second question:

It is noted that the Board took the decision to cancel the 'Forums' in both 2018 and 2019, that previously in 2017 was identified as the 'AGM', that was held the night before the National Championships that was held in October 2017. Trustees and the board are accountable to the membership and those that receive the benefit of charitable objects, but this was not achieved in either 2018 or 2019, both years where financially there was an impact on reserves. Does the Board agree that this decision prevented 'members' (by whichever definition was used) being able to hear first-hand from Board Trustees and Directors what was happening strategically and financially, irrespective of the numbers that we're able to attend and as no further opportunity was offered or made happen later in the year to discuss firstly, the high turnover of trustees in 2017 and thereby fulfilling the Charity Commission requirement to hold an AGM within a specified period from the close of the financial year?

Third question:

Roberta - you explained clearly why there was no AGM meeting in 2018, did I miss your explanation of why no meeting in 2019 other than the championships happened before the end of the financial year?

Fourth question:

The 2018 forum was announced as cancelled due to not have a quorum of Trustees. Not as there was no membership.

1.4 response:

Our Articles of Association for a Charitable Company (the Articles), which is our governing document, legally defines our members as the charity trustees (clause 16a). Our trustees have constitutional powers as per clause 9 to manage the affairs of PD-UK and exercise all the powers of Para Dance UK, this includes signing off the annual accounts and being accountable to Charity Commission and Companies House.

Our Articles define members and associate members differently. (See answer to question 3.2).

As per clause 17b, Associate members do not qualify as members for any purposes under the Charities Act, General Regulations and Dissolution Regulations. In line with the above, not convening an AGM for Associate members does not contravene our governing document.

Below we explain what has been offered:

Offering an AGM for the financial year 2017-18:

In 2018 we offered the Associate membership the chance to meet to discuss the financial year for 2017-2018 and hear from the trustees. Of our total associate membership, only 3 Associate members said they would attend, despite us coupling this with the National Championship to improve attendance.

It was therefore deemed an inappropriate use of limited charitable funds to hire a room and pay expenses to host the trustees and 3 Associate members. The trustees, therefore, decided in good faith to cancel the AGM.

Further Clause 18 of the Articles clearly states which areas the Associate membership is required to be consulted on. As there were no resolutions proposed during this period which required Associate membership approval, no risks were perceived in not conducting the AGM.

Before taking this decision, the trustees reviewed the cost to benefit ratio and did not deem that they could in good faith use the charity's funds of nearly £1000 to host a meeting for 3 people. This would divert money away from services that we could deliver. As a small organisation we have to be proportionate in how we spend our money and poor use of funds takes money away from services.

We did, however, make sure that we were transparent and accountable by providing an information pack which included the financial summary for 2017-2018, a CEO report, and an update regarding progress against our activities. This was sent to the whole Associate membership and feedback and comments were invited. It was also confirmed within this pack that a full set of accounts for 2017-2018 would be circulated once available, and these were issued via email in April 2019.

We discussed this decision with Charities Commission before cancelling the AGM, and they were satisfied that the information pack did provide an opportunity for engagement and transparency.

We did not receive any feedback or comments from Associate members following us issuing the pack, either directly or via the National Representative.

Offering an AGM for the financial year 2018-19: This is the meeting which was held on 7 November 2020. This was much later than planned though.

There were three reasons for this:

- To date, we have coupled our AGMs with our National Championships to improve attendance as AGM meetings were in person. The impact of moving our National Championships from the winter to summer meant that the sequencing of our annual meetings was disrupted. The change meant that we would be out of synch for 18 months. However, there was always a plan to hold an AGM for each financial year.

For 2017-2018 the AGM was offered in October 2018. The 2018-2019 AGM was due to be offered in summer 2020. The 2019-2020 AGM is planned to be offered in summer 2021 (which will bring us back in synch for an annual schedule).

- Our AGM for the 2018-2019 financial year was due to be offered at the 2020 National Championships which was planned for June 2020. This was delayed by 5 months due to coronavirus.

- The impact of the AGM being cancelled in 2018, with the switch from winter to summer, and then delay due to the pandemic, means there has been a significant period in between meetings. This is unfortunate and was not intended.

Working with the National Representative, we will be exploring ways to provide more opportunities for forum meetings, so this does not happen in the future. Meeting virtually via zoom also provides opportunities for doing this differently in the future.

Offering an AGM to discuss the financial year 2019-20: This will be offered in 2021. We are aiming to get into a more regular sequence with offering annual meetings which are timed around the preparation of the annual accounts.

Quorums: Clause 15 that specifies quorums for meetings is for trustees only and not the Associated Membership. The decision to cancel the public AGM was taken as only 3 associate members indicated their attendance – not because there was no quorum of Trustees.

1.5: Managing conflicts: Close relations on the board which was addressed during 2017-18, however, it is still felt that the day to day running and decision making that does not need board approval is the Senior Management Team made up of 3 Officers, 2 of whom are husband and wife. What is to be done with this ongoing conflict at a senior level in the organisation?

1.5 response: Our decision-making processes are supported by a robust set of standing orders and a scheme of delegation which states who makes which decision and what are the key responsibilities of the senior staff. These changes were agreed and implemented in 2018 following a full review of governance procedures led by the Chair.

This means that key decisions about spending and PD-UK strategy are held by the Board of Trustees and not officers of the charity. Controlled delegation of decisions is made to the senior management team, and this is supported by clear policies (such as conflicts of interest policy, financial controls, the scheme of delegation) with assurance checks undertaken by the Trustees (this is standard practice).

The Board makes key decisions, and the senior management team puts these decisions in place. We are confident that we have correct checks and balances in place and that preferential or biased decision making does not happen.

1.6: Approval of Minutes and accounts:

Why has an agenda item been included for review and presumably approval of the 2017 AGM minutes, when they have not been distributed and despite requesting a copy of these, they have still not been available?

1.6 response: This item was erroneously included in the AGM agenda. The minutes for 2017 have already been approved by our board of trustees as per the rules within our governing document.

The minutes for the previous members forum are published and are available on our website at <https://paradance.org.uk/about/governance/>. They are also sent to members following the meeting and were provided within the information pack for the financial year 2017-2018. We will review our contact database to ensure that your details are updated for future circulation.

1.7: Review of our governing document: It was noted within a discussion [the affiliated Instructors membership Facebook group] that there is an upcoming review of the Constitution (our governing document). We would remind the board of the current constitution terms and that any changes to this document are considered a major change and therefore subject to an Associate Member vote.

1.7 response: Our membership service needs to better reflect the diversity of our associate members. We are aware of several improvements which are needed, and the questions submitted to this AGM have highlighted some areas where we need to provide better clarity.

The Board are aware of their obligations to consult with our associate members about any substantive changes. In collaboration with the National Representative, we hope to do this through forums/focus groups during 2021 where we will discuss and seek inputs on how we can best serve our members, both now and in the future.

1.8: Correction in the annual accounts 2018-2019:

First question:

If you are aware that the Board members have been reported incorrectly steps should be taken to amend and update the filed reports.

Second question:

Presumably, this amendment will be included in annual report for the 201/2020 account.

1.8 response: A correction for the record regarding the 2018-2019 annual report and accounts was discussed at the AGM. This was:

We were informed of a point of confusion within the annual report of the trustees within the 2018-19 Annual Accounts.

This was related to page 4 paragraph 2 which incorrectly stated that the longest-serving trustee was the chair at 4.5 years. Roberta Beaton was recruited in August 2016 and confirmed as a trustee at the EGM held on 10 December 2016. She has served 3 years and 11 months to date (up to 10 November 2020). Within the reporting period of 2018-2019 (up to 31 July 2019) she would have served as a trustee for 2 years and 7 months. She has been involved with Para Dance UK for a total of 4 years and 2 months.

We have contacted the Charity Commission regarding this. They have confirmed that they are happy for the annual report and accounts to stand with the correction record within minutes of this AGM.

The correction will also be captured within the AGM minutes from the 7 November 2020 as the official record required by the Charities Commission.

1.9: Independent chair – two questions:

First question:

Please explain the role of an 'independent chair'?

Second question:

Can the chair explain the role of an 'independent chair' (non-executive position without voting rights) and how that differs from the Chairperson (appointed trustee position – with voting rights) including how from the explanation provided during the meeting that potentially, the 'independent chair' can overturn decisions made by appointed trustees?

1.9 response: The role of the Independent Chair (fulfilled by Martyn McCarthy) is to maintain the standards and ethics of PD-UK, and to make sure that the trustees keep to the aims and objectives of the charity.

The independent chair makes sure that we have an independent and fair system to investigate and deal with any allegations of foul play or misconduct. They do this in a way which is fair, consistent, efficient, and in line with the PD-UK Disciplinary Regulations and Codes of Conduct.

They also independently run the vote for the National Representative, making sure that submitted votes are eligible and that ballots are counted accurately.

Things you can expect the independent chair to do:

- Deal with misconduct accusations.
- Hold internal disciplinary hearings for athletes by following Disciplinary Regulations or Codes of Conduct,
- Respond to disciplinary queries.
- Provide information to the associate membership concerning disciplinary matters.
- Liaise with PD-UK Board regarding disciplinary matters.
- Supporting PU-UK customer complaints procedures.
- Making sure that all public votes and activities are reviewed and meet the guidelines within PD-UK policies and processes.

You can contact the independent chair via the secretary@paradance.org.uk or at telephone number 0300 111 3045.

The role of the independent chair is different from that of the chair of the board of trustees, which is fulfilled by Roberta Beaton. The independent chair does not have decision-making powers over the strategic direction or the day to day running of PD-UK. Their role is to assure both the associate membership and the board of trustees that decision making is fair and consistent, and supportive to the objectives of the charity.

If the independent chair feels something is wrong, they can challenge a decision to the Board of Trustees via the Chair, they can investigate an issue and produce a report with recommendations which is open to all members. The Independent chair cannot overturn a decision made by the board but can put a strong case as to why it needs to change.

The role of the chair of the board of trustees is to provide leadership to the board during decision making, be a channel of communication between the senior management team and board, provide mentorship and support trustees, and be a figurehead for the charity.

2. Finance

2.1: Fundraising expertise: Fundraising is a key part of maintaining and being able to sustain a charity providing services usually to the most vulnerable sections of the community. How did the board of trustee's effect this in the year of 2018 and 2019, without a fundraising expert within the team (as declared via Charity Commission and Companies House)?

2.1 response: As rightly pointed out, fundraising is the key for charities and is a function that all Board Trustees and Senior Management team participate in. We did have the relevant fundraising expertise within the charity and were able to successfully raise a significant amount of funds for the period 2018-2019 (£143,701 as per our accounts). This was in line with similar amounts collected during the previous 2017-2018 period.

Our Board, Senior Management team, and our CEO in particular all have multiple years of Charity experience, relationships and skills that are effectively utilised in our fundraising activities.

2.2: Restricted funding – two questions:

First question:

The accounts show that most wages and rent are paid out of restricted funds. Is there a guideline on how restricted funds can be used?

Second question:

There is only a small amount of deferred income shown in the Balance Sheet (see the note 2c at the bottom of page 13) meaning any conditions attached to any Grants received have all been met. So, if specific grants were put in restricted funds and there is money over, should that now be moved into unrestricted funds?

2.2. response: Under Restricted Funds – the funder/donor specifies what the funds they have provided can be utilised for. They state the guidelines on what they will pay for, and in most cases staff wages account for the bulk of this.

We submit funding applications which ask for funding in return for us providing specific activities or services. As part of these applications, we tell the funder how we will spend any funds and they either agree or do not agree. All funders state the types of things they will or will not pay for, so we know what to ask for within our applications.

An example of Restricted funding would be where a funder may pay us to organise the Para Dance Games and this means we can only spend this money on activities related to the Para Dance Games.

If money is not spent, the funds will be returned to the funder. On some limited occasions, the funder may remove the restrictions and allow us to keep the excess unspent money. This would

then move to unrestricted funding as the restrictions have been removed. This is always done in agreement with the funder.

2.3: Accounts for the trading year 2019-2020. When and how will the Board be presenting the draft accounts for 2019/20, Year ended 31.07.2020 for approval by the membership before submission to the Charity Commission and Companies House before the published deadline?

2.3 response: Our financial year ran from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020. We did not have time to prepare the 2019-2020 annual accounts for the AGM on 7 November 2020. This was because this was only 3 months after the close of the financial year and not enough time to prepare, check and seek external examination of the accounts. We have 9 months after year ending to file our accounts with Charity Commission and Companies House.

As such, the AGM held on 7 November 2020 was for the financial year 2018 – 2019. We had intended this meeting to be held in June or July 2020, but we were still recovering from the pandemic at this point and did not have time to prepare everything. We will hold another meeting in the coming months to review 2019-2020.

As discussed at the AGM, as per our governing document signing off the annual accounts is solely the responsibility of the board of trustees.

Once approved, the information pack for the financial year 2019- 2020 will be posted on our website <https://paradance.org.uk/about/governance/> and will also be sent to the members.

2.4: Details within the trustee report for 2018-2019 (annual accounts) – two questions:

First question:

Cash flow risk - there is not an issue with mentioning this, however, the issue is the wording which states "primarily". This is not a relevant clause if we do not use foreign investment and should be reviewed as to the actual cash flow risks and reference the cash accounting policy in 2. (e) in the financial statements.

Second question:

Liquidity. Again, this should be reviewed to state the actual liquidity risks. It also refers to the accounting policies which do not reference liquidity

2.4 response: In 2019-2020 we have changed our External Examiners. We will now use their standard approach to charity accounting which provides far more information and detail than was previously supplied. We will share your feedback with them as we prepare the 2019-2020 accounts.

2.5: Approving the accounts - How were the accounts submitted for 2018- 2019 without AGM approval?

2.5 response: As per our Articles of Association for a Charitable Company, Annual accounts are approved by the members (our trustees) The trustees approved the accounts in July 2020. They

were submitted in July 2020 following agreement from the Charity Commission and Companies House for a short extension.

Our Articles of Association do not provide for annual accounts to be approved by our associate members.

2.6: Delays to filing the accounts – two questions submitted:

First question

Please can the trustee with responsibility clarify why “Covid” (coronavirus) has been cited as a reason for delay introducing accounts for the year 2018-2019, that ended 31.07.2019 when Covid 19 as a pandemic wasn’t declared worldwide until March 2020? What was the real reason for the delay?

Second question

We would simply question why, for a fairly small charity (in comparison to most national bodies), the Accounts and Annual Report are now taking so long. Financial / Accounts information is pretty much live. It was always the case that these along with the Annual Report were completed ready for approval at AGM which was usually held in Nov-Jan following year-end. It would seem an unreasonable length of time to go beyond this and then require an extension to 12 months after the year-end. It does not demonstrate good practice. The financial statements and board report for 2019-20 should be made available for the upcoming AGM for member approval.

Third question

If finance is inspected monthly, why still did it take so long to file the 2018 accounts... the deadline was in reality Pre-Covid by March. The reports should have already been filed by end March

2.6 response: We are required to report PD-UK total income and expenditure via our annual return within 9 months of the close of our financial year to the Charities Commission. In this case, our financial year closed on 31 July 2019 and our accounts needed to be filed by 31 May 2020.

For Companies House we need to submit a return within 12 months since we last filed. So, the timescales are the same.

We planned for the preparation of our 2018-2019 to be pushed back to later in the year so that we could secure a new external examiner (this is the person who provides independent assurance of our annual accounts). We started the process to change the examiner in summer 2019 and met with 3 different candidates to undertake our due diligence about who to choose. We then underwent a selection process and had to agree this with the board of trustees.

Before coronavirus happened, we were on track to complete this by the 31 May 2020 deadline. However, national lockdown formally happened on 25 March 2020, where many organisations pulled away from day to day business to make plans in advance of lockdown (including PD-UK). This further impacted the timescales, and in the end, we requested and received from the Charity Commission and Companies House an extension to the filing date. Therefore, we can confirm that

coronavirus was the real reason for the delay as this was unplanned, on top of a planned delay, whilst we secured a new external advisor.

The AGM just held was for the period of 2018-2019. We had intended for this meeting to take place in June or July 2020, but this was also delayed due to coronavirus. We will hold another meeting with the associate membership to review the 2019-2020 annual accounts next year.

2.7: External Examiners - What was the reasoning behind confining examiners as local to Watford (benefits v dis-benefits)?

2.7 response: Our previous external examiner was based in Devon, where the charity was established in 2006. We moved the charity to Watford in 2013 and continued to use the same examiner for several years thereafter.

However considering the Charity was growing in size, there was a need for revising our approach to charity accounting to provide more information and details, so we thought to change External Examiners and decided to seek expertise from local firms, leveraging their proximity for quicker interactions and building closer relationships.

2.8: Deficit: There is a large deficit in the Unrestricted Funds on the accounts for 2018-2019 - the year in question for the AGM – what is the Board’s strategy to rectify this loss?

2.8 response: The trustees have also identified this concern which is being addressed as part of a longer-term strategy that the Charity is developing. As with all organisations, some years are going to be more difficult than others. In conjunction with the Management Team, we already have started adapting our strategy and processes to build more resources to ensure this deficit is lowered in the coming years.

2.9 £400,000 funding - assume this is long term funding? What is the core purpose of its use?

2.9 response: This funding is designated to be spent from April 2020 to July 2021, covering some part of the 2019-2020 financial year (from April 2020 to July 2020) and the full 2020-2021 financial year (from August 2020 to July 2021).

This was predominantly emergency funding provided to charities to recover after coronavirus. We are using this to develop content which can be delivered online (such as making our training online) and developing new activities for the future. The slide pack provided to members following the AGM has more details.

3. Associate membership

3.1: Who are the associate members: Could clarity be provided on Para Dances view on who are their members please? And if they see their associate members as affiliated or franchised, please? Clarity is required around this, please.

3.1 response: We have 3 types of associate members. These are:

- **Affiliated para dance instructors:** Instructors who have completed our Inclusive Dance Training (IDT) and signed up to our affiliation service. (Affiliated members are not franchised to Para Dance UK).
- **Registered competitive members:** Dancers (people with and without disabilities) who have signed up as athletes.
- **Supportive members:** People who are interested in inclusive dance, para dance sport or disability (this is a mixture of people with disabilities, people who support people with disabilities, volunteers, partner organisations, sector influencers and the general public with an interest in Para Dance UK).

We are embarking on an exercise to identify the different categories of people within our associated membership so that we can better understand their needs and tailor our services as required.

This will be supported by your National Representative, who will be asked to engage with associate members to ensure that we are inclusive of everyone's views.

3.2: Defining associate members (terms and conditions of membership and the sign-up procedure)
– five questions below:

First question:

Would the Board kindly explain and clarify the levels and qualifications for membership of the organisation, in particular with those afforded voting rights in areas pertaining to representation of "members". Can the board confirm the definition of a member?

Is a member defined as:-

- A supporter who does not participate in Para dance sport.
- A member solely a paid-up Competitive Register Member?
- A member solely someone who has signed up to an email newsletter.
- How does this link with the definitions in clause 3 and Clause 17 of the constitution?

Second question:

The "Associate Membership" criteria are outlined in the Constitution Clause 17. An "Associate Members" irrespective of whether a fee is charged for membership must agree to the Terms and Conditions of that membership.

Instructors and Competitors already agree to abide by the Rules and Regulations as their terms of membership, however, since the new constitution was implemented and a "new supporter membership" launched in June 2018, the charity has failed to acquire members in a manner that adheres to the constitution and gain consent from these members to "agree to the terms and conditions" of the charity's rules and ethos.

Since June 2018 new “members” are simply signing up to a mailing list. (Image below shows the sign-up terms form.) The only information the charity holds is a name and email address and the process which clearly identifies itself as “agreeing to receive this newsletter” is simply signing up to a marketing list and falls gravely short of the terms of the Constitution and the recommendations of the Charity Commission. These so-called members are therefore not eligible to be classed as Associate Members under the terms of the constitution.

This was raised prior to the recent AGM and the Board held by its decision that it “reasonably” implemented the decision in relation to Members who support Para Dance UK” and continued to allow mailing list members to vote and have access to this AGM with potentially sensitive information.

As a separate clarification, the former membership did not vote or agree for the new free membership – it was announced by the board in the Forum meeting in 2017 and simply implemented in June 2018 as announced on Social Media.

Given the black and white terms of the Constitution we believe the board should fully explain to this forum it’s decision and how it justifies that a mailing list subscriber fulfils the terms of an Associate Member as defined in our Constitution Document.

[This question was slightly edited for length – removing screen shots]

Third question:

The question centred around supportive members are described in the Constitution as "supportive members and agree to the terms and condition of said memberships". The sign up to "supportive membership" does not gain agreement to any Terms and Conditions. Can you please address that part of the question?

Sign up to "Supportive Membership" doesn't meet the terms of the constitution. Instructors and Competitors do agree to T&C as paid members. So supportive members aren't valid under the constitution

Forth question:

Please can the Chair and Board consider the following question and explain: - the group of supportive members, who don't pay any fees to the charity as opposed to the group of associate members, who do through an affiliate fee or competitive register entry fees. How can it be justified that these two groups receive theoretically equitable voting rights particular on the role of National Representative? How would the National Representative be able to canvas personally the supportive members to gain their views on the technical and strategic development of issues for the dance sport?

Fifth question:

This group of supportive members within the associate members don't pay any fees to the charity. How can this be equitable to be given voting rights?

3.2 response: See Q 3.1 above for details of the types of associate members.

A. Our charity model:

Para Dance UK is a charity limited by guarantee. That means that we are subject to both Charity Law and Company Law.

B. Definition of members:

Our Articles of Association for a Charitable Company (the Articles), which is our governing document, legally defines our members as the charity trustees (clause 16a). Our trustees have constitutional powers as per clause 9 to manage the affairs of Para Dance UK and exercise all the powers of Para Dance UK. Our charity trustees can vote on decisions except where powers are given to associate members. The Articles defines members and associate members differently (see below).

C. Details held about members (our trustees):

Our legal obligations under the Charities Act 2011 and Companies Law 2006 is to hold the details of all our members. We can confirm that we have the full details of our members (who are the trustees) which can be scrutinised on the Companies House website or Charity Commission's register of charities. Trustees sign up to detailed terms and conditions at the start of their term, and we undertake significant due diligence as part of our recruitment process. This meets best practice advocated by the Charities Commission (our regulator).

D. Terms and conditions for members (our trustees):

Members (trustees) have to sign up to our Articles of Association for a Charitable Company. They also sign up to our standing orders, the scheme of delegation, conflict of interests' policy and confidentiality agreements (as well as all other PD-UK policies).

E. Definition of associate members:

The Articles allow members (our trustees) to give powers to associate members. Associate members are supporters of the charity and are classified as: Affiliated Instructors, Registered Competitive Members, and Supportive Members (clause 17c).

Associate members have the power to vote for a National Representative (clause 18a).

Associate members have no other powers assigned, and all other powers are held by the trustees (our members) (clause 16).

As per clause 17b, Associate members do not qualify as members for any purposes under the Charities Act, General Regulations and Dissolution Regulations.

Clause 18b states that the Trustees will consult with the Associate membership on critical matters before final decisions are made by the trustees. Associate members will be consulted on amending the Articles of Association, the Amalgamation of PD-UK with another charity, and winding up/dissolving Para Dance UK.

F. Terms and conditions for Associate members:

None of our Associate members (that is affiliated instructors, registered competitive members and supportive members) are formally asked to agree to the terms of our membership.

This means that they are not formally asked to agree to the powers assigned to them within the Articles. None of these 3 groups is asked to agree to vote for a National Representative. Best

practice suggests that we should make this more explicit, and this is something we are already reviewing and plan to implement for all types of Associate members (this will mean when any Associate members signs up to PD-UK they will be told about their power to vote for a National Representative under the Articles).

Some associate members do agree to specific terms and conditions for the services they are receiving. These are:

- Affiliated instructors agree to the specific terms of our affiliation service for instructors.
- Registered and competitive members agree to the rules and regulations for competition participation.
- Supportive members agree to marketing consent via our web form.

No associate member is asked to explicitly agree their powers under the Articles within the above terms and conditions, other than consenting to become part of the membership.

We agree this is confusing and we aim to make this easier to understand.

We disagree that supportive members are excluded from the associate membership because they do not sign up to this power, as none of our associate members is asked to specifically agree to this term. We are reviewing this for the future.

G. Eligibility of supportive members signing up via our webform:

The Articles does not state how associate members will sign up or what information needs to held. This is something we are reviewing, and we will provide better information shortly.

We do hold a register of associate members and capture varying amounts of information depending on the other services these associate members use (for example, we hold detailed information about competitive members as this is needed to enable them to compete under our rules of play).

We only ask for personal data when it is necessary and relevant to the services an associate member receives. This helps us to meet the requirements of UK data compliance laws including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). For supportive members, this is currently the full name and contact channel in the form of an email address.

H. Eligibility of supportive members to vote for the National Representative

We considered whether supportive members should be eligible to vote for the National Representative under the Articles when this question was raised by our previous National Representative. The board of trustees reviewed the Articles and voted by written resolution to retain supportive members within the vote. Our rationale was that there were no clauses, terms or legal implications which should exclude them from this power.

The National Representative is intended to represent all our associate members, and given this, everyone should be allowed to choose who this is. There would be no benefit from excluding supportive members from the vote or being consulted on services they receive.

An associate member may pay a fee for a service they receive. An affiliated instructor pays a fee for the affiliation service, and competitive members pay to compete at the competition. We choose to remove any fees for supportive members as they do not access these services, and fees were a barrier to people supporting PD-UK which goes against our aims to increase awareness of inclusive dance and Para Dance Sport. Paying a fee does not mean that a type of associate member has more rights than any other within our Articles.

Our independent chair, Martyn McCarthy, was satisfied that the trustees reasonably implemented this decision, as the types of details held for associate members are not mandated in law.

We acknowledge the feedback that this is confusing within the Articles. We are reviewing this document to make it clearer.

I. National Representative's ability to canvass all members:

We have the facilities to contact all associate members through mass mailouts and membership newsletters. They can also provide information to our social media and website channels.

These are the main ways the National Representative can canvass all associate members to encourage engagement and feedback. Communications from the National Representative across these channels will begin soon.

J. Associate members formally voting to make supportive membership free of charge:

As per the Articles, trustees have the power to agree and implement decisions. However, in 2017 we consulted with the Associate membership on our intention to make supportive membership free, so that we could remove the barriers for people wanting to support Para Dance UK.

There was no significant dissent to this issue by the Associate members during the AGM discussion at the time, and the trustees reasonably implemented the decision in good faith and the interests of our charity objects under clause 5b (ii).

3.3: Question-related to affiliation and groups:

There is still a tendency particularly on Social Media to refer to affiliated groups as “our groups” and “our members”. Groups are not “owned” by PDUK. They are independent groups who have a registered instructor who has done a PDUK course.

The website also states on the “About” page “At a local level, we have set up groups across the UK...”. PDUK have not established the groups, again they are independent groups/teachers who have simply completed PDUK training and pay a registration fee to be under the umbrella of a governing body.

PDUK needs to review its stance as an independent governing body and that they themselves are not a “national group” with franchises.

Groups/instructors/members should be referred to in their own right as local groups which in turn will help to publicise those groups and enhance membership as a whole.

3.3 response: Our tonality online aims to be warm, friendly, and fostering a sense of camaraderie and fraternity. We will undertake a review of the language used on our website and online platforms

We have taken each in turn:

- Affiliated instructors, groups and the wider membership sign up to services that we provide. It is legitimate that we refer to people and groups that we are connected with (or associated with) as ‘our’, because we have an established relationship with them and this is a warm and friendly way to refer to one another. It does not suggest a lack of independence and is a tone of voice widely used across the charity sector.

Also, Clause 5, part B (i) of our Articles of Association for a Charitable Company states that we can form an association of inclusive dance clubs and para dance clubs in the UK and abroad. This is not a franchise model but means we can provide details of and recommend inclusive clubs that people with disabilities can access across the UK (essentially allowing us to provide a directory of services of people we are associated with).

- Part of our work is to assist people to set up groups and services for people with disabilities. Some regular groups we have set up ourselves (e.g. Shire Spinners) and some we have provided support to (such as subsidised training via bursaries for Inclusive Dance Training or policy support).
- Our Articles and website do not state that we have a franchise model. We are a UK charity which both provides services and signposts people, to associated services.
- Where groups are seeking promotion by us, please contact the PD-UK team with your press release and details about the promotion you are seeking.

3.5: Number of associate members:

- **How many affiliate instructors does Para Dance UK have?**
- **How many competitive register members are on the register as of this AGM?**
- **How many supporting members are there as of this AGM?**

3.5 response: as of 7 November 2020 Para Dance UK had (registered):

- Affiliated Instructors: 112
- Competitive members: 75
- Supportive members: 120

Total associate members: 307 members

3.6: Structure of our associate membership:

It is suggested that there is a greater need for the charity to have 2 separate umbrella heads with 2 separate memberships ensuring better communication. As a charity and NGB Para Dance UK, competitive members & instructor members request the right to be supported and managed under a separate policy. It is suggested that a lead is designated to drive this forward with experts on the board to support this around separate PR, separate fundraising, separate governing advice & support ensuring that messages get filtered down from Para Dance to its instructors leading local groups/clubs whether they are independent or Para Dance lead. This will ensure that there is a clearly defined area of competitive sport as part of the organisation away from community dance and the arts.

3.6 response:

We have reviewed our aims and the wider sector, and feel that on balance and based on evidence, splitting the Charity and NGB in two would create inefficiency by separating shared services such as marketing and fundraising. It could erode the benefits of what we are seeking in both areas, especially as they are complementary to one another.

Our experience has shown that funders are reluctant to fund the NGB on its own. To date, our work on inclusive dance has largely funded the work as an NGB. This is because we can 'package' the aims of the NGB alongside the aims with inclusive dance, which makes more appealing to funders and sponsors as they get two activities for one.

We, therefore, believe that separation would potentially be more damaging to the Sport than helpful. The only alternative then would be to charge significant memberships fees and competition fees which could exclude some members of our community, which would breach our ethical framework. We are here for inclusion, not exclusion.

We do understand that we need to expand our expertise regarding Para Dance Sport, and we have recruited advisors who support the Board in decision making for Para Dance Sport.

Working with the National Representative, we will work to find ways to create more conversation around Para Dance Sport and aim to hold a round table discussion in the future.

3.7: Associate member numbers (affiliated instructors): There appears to be a disparity between the numbers of instructors being declared. CEO presentation slide stated there are 'around 50 instructors. Further on the slide 112? Only 67 instructors are included on the Facebook Instructors group one of the methods of communications. What the actual number registered and how many are active? How the group of instructors who are all affiliated are, communicated with and feedback sought, how is this reviewed and developed into strategic planning for development? How many independent dance groups are led by IDT qualified instructors?

3.7 response:

Disparity: As outlined in our annual report of 2018-2019, PD-UK had a total of 87 instructors. 54 were newly trained people who joined the membership and 34 were instructors who have renewed their membership at 31 July 2019.

The disparity is due to comparing different financial years (2018-2019 verses 2019-2020), and comparing information provided as a snapshot in time rather than the year-end result at 31 July 2020 (that is, the figures are not like for like, so an equal comparison cannot be made).

Across the year the number of affiliated instructors fluctuates, as it is dependent on the number of new sign-ups and the number of people who renew their membership. There are 'peaks and declines' as people sign-up in batches after attending a course and you may have several who choose not to renew.

At the time of the survey in September 2020, there were 112 instructors registered as affiliated instructors. The number will fluctuate from the year-end result as some people are likely not to renew their membership (especially if their service is not running due to coronavirus).

The number of Facebook users: The affiliated instructor's Facebook group does not hold all of our affiliated instructors; it is their choice if they want to join social media and not everyone does.

The number of active instructors: Our definition of active instructors is the *number of people who join or renew their affiliated membership*. In our experience, people do not renew if they are not active due to the cost. These are the figures we present in our annual report and accounts.

Communication with instructors: There are multiple ways we communicate and seek feedback from instructors. These are:

- Regular e-newsletter “Dancebeat” which is sent to our Instructors, “Para News” which is sent to Competitors and Supporters, and a general Newsletter to Supporters
- Mass email on specific topics
- Social media
- Responding to questions submitted directly to the team via the instructor liaison or secretary
- Via the National Representative
- Responding to questions submitted via Facebook (affiliated instructors’ group and inclusive dance group)
- Surveys

We review feedback which has been provided as part of our annual business planning processes which feeds our short- and long-term plans. Where feedback is provided by the National Representative, the board of trustees responds and it is the responsibility of the National Representative to communicate this to the associate membership (PD-UK can provide access to mass email when requested to do this). The National Representative is also invited to provide direct feedback at some board meetings when appropriate.

We have been informed by the National Representative that providing more opportunities for feedback from the associate membership is one of the key areas of focus over the next 6 to 9 months.

Dance groups led by an IDT instructor: This number can fluctuate as some Instructors may start a group up, but this will only be for their local Day Services or SEN School. We can confirm that any group activity we do promote is lead or supported by an individual who has completed our Inclusive Dance Training.

3.8: Uptake of surveys by instructors: Many instructors are self-employed and needed to adapt their services very early in the pandemic to be able to exist, and therefore the provision of video support for Instructors was rather late. Whilst the resources are limited, maybe this is why the response rate was only about 8%. What are the board’s goals to increase instructor awareness and participation, in addition to dancer/athlete take up?

3.8 response: As detailed in question 3.7, this is a priority for the National Representative to explore over the next 6 to 9 months to increase awareness and response rates.

We have reviewed trends and they suggest that this is not an issue limited to coronavirus. Survey responses have always been under 10 percent for the total number of affiliated instructors. This would indicate that we need to find other ways to seek feedback from instructors which will be reviewed with the National Representative.

3.9: Voting for the National Representative: How many voters were both Instructor and competitive?

3.9 response: Voters were either classified as an affiliated instructor or a competitive member. Membership voters were not registered as dual members. Please see the table below for a breakdown of votes.

Valid votes cast by Membership category	Votes
Competitor	20
Instructor Affiliate	18
Supporting	1

4. Devolution

4.1: Return to play guidance: Why is most of the help, information and assistance from Para Dance UK focused on English rules and guidance when its role is as an NGB for the whole of the country including the devolved nations? All of whom have different rules and regulations?

4.1 response: The landscape of the coronavirus pandemic continues to change rapidly across all 4 nations of the UK. To provide guidance in the most efficient way, we designed the Return to Play Guidance to address the common themes of the pandemic which were relevant to all UK countries (such as social distancing and health and safety considerations). This was instead of attempting to replicate specific guidance already provided in detail by each country.

Our rationale for a single UK guide was to make the best use of our limited resources. PD-UK has a part-time workforce of 5 people and we needed to manage several coronavirus priorities alongside generating this guidance. We chose not to replicate country-specific advice and guidance which was already widely available, instead, we signposted people to their own nation's resources as individuals are best placed to understand local restrictions. We did consult partners to ensure consistency with other sector leaders.

We are committed to ensuring that our membership receives up to date information and have supplemented the Return to Play guidance with social media information provided to instructors, and links to country-specific resources. We also believe that instructors are best placed to understand local restrictions, and we asked them to take a common-sense approach as to whether or not they run activities.

4.2: Growth of devolution representation: How does the Board see the future growth of Para Dance UK across all of the devolved nations in the UK and how this will be implemented, please? It is apparent that under these new and uncertain ever-changing times there is a clear need to have regional representation from each devolved Nation to advise and work with their own Nations Arts & Sporting bodies as well as the Para Dance Team

4.2 response: Devolution is a key issue and coronavirus has brought this to the forefront for many organisations. We are committed to exploring with the National Representative how we can improve communication and representation from across the UK. As requested at the AGM, we would welcome ideas from associate members about how we can best achieve this as we want to better understand your needs.

Our initial idea is to pilot a forum meeting (a members group) which has representatives from each of the 4 countries to explore this further. Working with Katie Goodwin, our National Representative, we hope is to hold this remotely in the first half of 2021. If you have any suggestions or would like to be involved in the pilot please contact secretary@paradance.org.uk.

4.3: Representation in Wales – two questions:

First question:

A welsh instructor feels disgraced and embarrassed at times when attending regional strategy meetings on a personal basis, when PD-UK as our governing body are paid members but yet do not attend or request a local instructor attends on their behalf to feedback to them. At this time, it's critical that NGBs attend some if these meetings to stay in tune with the whole of the UK if they intend to support and be part of the UK and expect instructors to continue their affiliation. Perhaps it is time to have regional (country) representation as has been highlighted through recent guidance there has been little clarity for the devolved countries on Return to Play. Also, to help iron out the intricacies of governance required in each region.

Second question:

It would be great to see representation at the Welsh Sports Association Meetings held fortnightly

4.3 response: We would be happy for the Welsh associate member to engage with the team directly so that we can understand the specific issues and pressures and discuss solutions.

If an associate member is unhappy, we would encourage you to contact the team in the first instance to resolve your issue. If you are still unhappy please submit a complaint so that we can deal with issues appropriately as per our complaints policy.

We attend the Welsh Sports Association meetings monthly. With a small part-time team, we do not currently have the resources to attend every 2 weeks.

Thank you for raising the point concerning regional representation. This idea is something that we will be exploring with the National Representative. We hope to discuss options with our associate members in due course (likely to be early 2021).

4.4: Growth of devolution representation through partnerships: What additional opportunities and partnerships, both national and international and will the board be exploring to ensure inclusivity for all areas of all 4 nations so that there is a very clear pathway for all athletes, so that “everyone can dance”?

4.4 response: We have many national partnerships which cover all nations of the UK. As part of our planning, we will continue to explore partnerships internationally, nationally, and locally (in regions and devolved nations) so that we can draw on local experience. As discussed in questions 4.1 and 4.2, we aim to encourage feedback from different parts of the UK so that we can tailor our services as required.

Although there are different ways that each devolved nation runs itself, at the heart of this question is people wanting to dance. Regardless of where someone lives, we advocate for the establishment of inclusive dance and para dance opportunities and will provide resources to support people to do this regardless of where they are based in the UK.

“Everyone can dance” cuts across borders, and our role is to raise awareness of inclusive dance and Para Dance Sport and support people to access opportunities. As the NGB for Para Dance Sport the rules of play are UK rules, so we will ensure within our resources and ability to make sure that all of the UK is involved, and with the development of our Talent Pathways and other activities will help us to ensure consistency and fair play.

We have mentioned previously that working with the new National Representative that part of the individual role will be to look at how we can effectively engage with all communities in the UK to ensure everyone has an equal voice whether that is Wales, Scotland, England or Northern Ireland.

5. Diversity and inclusion

5.1: BAME representation: The question I have, is whether there is little participation from the black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) community and if so, does Para Dance UK conduct any related studies to help formulate plans to encourage active BAME participation and or increase associated membership. Thank you,

5.1 response: We are committed to diversity and inclusion as part of our ethical framework. We stand by our ethos that ‘Everyone Can Dance’ and welcome everyone to take up the opportunity to dance. However, we recognise that there may continue to be some perceived barriers which we are seeking to reduce.

We do conduct Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) on services and products to check that we have reduced any barriers to access from people with protected characteristics. This allows us a better understanding of how we can adapt and develop our services, and areas which we may need to improve. We continue to work to recruit BAME members to participate in Inclusive dance and Para Dance Sport.

We have conducted no studies or research ourselves as we are not a research body, but we do review secondary research materials from across the Dance community, and we welcome feedback and discussion about how we can reach a wider community of people through our associate membership.

We also have recently recruited a new Marketing and Communications Trustee, Catherine Woolfe, who is reviewing how we communicate and engage the wider community. This will include the language we use, and the imagery we use. If you have any feedback or suggestions that could feed into this review then please do contact us via secretary@paradance.org.uk.

5.2: Providing information in advance: Please can these presentation slides be included in the bundle distributed afterwards? They look comprehensive and worth spending more time looking at. My dyslexia (neurodiversity) prevent me being able to read them at this pace. Please can this be born in mind for inclusiveness at all future online presentations

5.2 response: Thanks for the feedback. Yes, we will aim to provide slides one week in advance of future meetings.

5.3: Supporting people with learning disabilities: Is there a plan to put support in place for people who have a learning disability so that they can complete the instructors training course and then deliver dance in the community in a supported way? I'm thinking of similar models that Companies such as Dance Syndrome and stop-gap use to enable and facilitate those with Learning disabilities to deliver dance sessions.

5.3 response: We continue to look at ways that we can engage individuals to become instructors, and we believe that any individual attending our courses should have the support and opportunity to develop and grow their skills to their maximum ability.

We take a person-centred approach to deliver our courses, and we have adapted our materials to be accessible, translating them into audio and large print, and have provided interpreters and extended exam times to give everyone as much opportunity to take part.

With all courses, the individual needs to prove they can confidently and competently deliver and instruct a group of individuals to perform, compete or have fun. They need to demonstrate compliance with our ethical framework to deliver activities which are inclusive, equal, safe, and respect people's dignity.

As we do take a person-centred approach to learning, we would want to recommend someone with learning disabilities meets with us so that we can understand the outcomes they want to achieve, how they learn, and whether we can put in place adjustments to support them to take part. We may not be the best-placed organisation to help people achieve their outcomes, in this case, we would support an individual to access a more suitable service if we cannot implement adjustments.

They may be other types of courses, continuous professional development (CPD) or opportunities we could offer if the IDT were not suitable.

6. Strategy and planning

6.1: Communications and reach: Please can the board share its vision and effective communication strategy with all partners vested and involved in Para Dance, to ensure that membership in whatever category, participation and promotion of the sport both Nationally and Internationally is increased significantly, particularly as a National Governing Body, visibility and recognition are perhaps not as clear we would all like?

6.1 response: We are currently reviewing our short term and longer-term plans to ensure we can deliver the right services in a post coronavirus world.

We will share this with associated members in due course, as our plans are still being developed. This will include how we will work with associate members and partners.

Will continue to look at ways we can support and improve communication across all associate member groups, and we are reviewing the feedback we have received as we know this is an area where we want to improve. We are working with the National Representative and our new marketing trustee, Catherine Woolfe, to explore this and formulate our plans. We will share this in due in course.

Growing the reach of our services is a key challenge we need to respond to in our plans, both for inclusive dance and para dance sport.

6.2: Training strategy: How we will lead and drive the training forward in the future addressing the greater need to enhance on the safety element of our training. Including:

- **Bringing in experts from a therapeutic background to support the training around the modules in both the IDT (Inclusive Dance Training) and Dance Sport qualifications ensuring all future instructors are properly trained.**
- **An Occupational Therapist along with the existing Physiotherapist sitting on the board to provide advice and support as well as training for all trainers providing the DDS & IDT course content along with the training in general.**

6.2 response: Currently, our focus is recovering from the impact of coronavirus on our training provision and restarting training in a safe way which can be delivered remotely whilst the UK is socially distancing. A pilot of our remote IDT is due by the end of the year.

As restrictions ease, we will look to restart the face to face practical elements of our courses so that we can provide a blended approach to learning. These two elements will be our focus for the next 6 to 9 months. This is an interesting question though, and one which we would like to give some more considered thought to as we begin to draw together our longer-term plans

It is important to note, our training does focus on safety first, but there may be areas where we can draw on the knowledge of others to see if there are additional learning points. We will discuss this and seek further input when we are ready to focus on our longer-term planning.

If we do require additional expertise, this does not necessarily need to sit at Board level as we can draw experts as required.

7. Services

7.1: Videos: What's the uptake on the weekly pre-recorded video sessions been?

7.1 response: We are still piloting our approach to pre-recorded video sessions. We will provide the associate membership more information once the pilots have been evaluated.

7.2: National Championships: What is the ongoing situation regarding the National Championships?

7.2 response: PD-UK is committed to getting our athletes and community back to dancing as soon as possible. We have to do this within the restrictions set around coronavirus, and restrictions continue to change regularly. As soon as we know more information, we shall inform our associate members, partners, and supporters.

7.3. Inclusive dance training:

I am aware that Para Dance UK confirms to other equivalent National Organisations that over 100 individuals have been through the Inclusive Dance Training (IDT) Programme. Please can you the Board confirm how frequently the programme is reviewed and updated in line with other national professional organisations, how is the programme moderated externally and given accreditation that is nationally recognised. How are IDT candidates who have completed the course, mentored beyond receipt of their certificate, how is their continued personal development (CPD) reviewed? What work is underway with other national dance organisations to share the qualifications to provide a truly inclusive experience for all those that may be interested?

7.3. response: All of our courses are reviewed, and quality assured at regular points. This includes user feedback that we have received from each course participant, feedback from our independent examiners, and expertise from trainers delivering the courses. We also undertake an annual review with all key delivery staff to ensure the materials are up to and factually correct. This is supplemented by collaboration with our Advisers to seek their support.

Regarding the course, participants are assessed by independent examiners. If they do not demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the theoretical elements of inclusive dance (assessed against standard criteria) they will not progress onto the practical elements. This ensures that people leave the course with a standard level of knowledge and equal outcomes.

This is not an externally moderated course but is endorsed by Exercise Movement and Dance (EMD) UK.

On completion of the course, we offer 12 months of free affiliated membership. Affiliated instructors receive regular updates via newsletter and have access to the instructor's support site and CPD opportunities and modules. Uptake (usage) of the service by affiliated instructors remains relatively low though, for example, we released new CPD in September 2020 where only 10 percent of instructors have accessed the materials.

Also, we continue to provide regular opportunities via the channels of social media, email, and surveys, for instructors to ask questions or access support.

For a detailed overview of our IDT programme, please visit our website at <https://paradance.org.uk/training/courses/>.

7.4: Does the board believe on the performance of the last 4 years of National Championships that this is a sustainable national event, based on participation and funding financially?

7.4 response: Yes. We believe that Para Dance Sport is a central part of PD-UK as an NGB, and we will continue to host champions and support our athletes.

8. General Questions

8.1. Head office: As the Le Marie building, registered office for the charity was condemned for health reasons, (asbestos, inaccessible lifts building maintenance etc.) where is the charity now based from and administration point of view, where is the dance studio that can be accessed by wheelchairs, and how is this benefit of being an affiliated instructor being offered for use to those near enough to use it.

8.1 response: We are still registered at Lemarie Centre for our main offices. Due to the pandemic, our staff have been working from home.

We are in negotiations about the next steps following the Lemarie Centre being condemned and will make any relevant announcements when we are commercially ready to do so. If an instructor requires studio space in the Watford area which is wheelchair accessible, this can be arranged as there are suitable venues across Hertfordshire. Please contact our team to discuss your needs.

In terms of use of this benefit before coronavirus, this was very low.

8.2: Virtual meetings: The difficulty of attending an event (or meeting) a day before a national championship reflects on the doubling of costs for participants because of the overnight costs from so many coming from afar. Perhaps the board need to consider this (virtual meeting) for future AGMs – what are the board's views?

With an attendance of 30 including trustees (who are members) and the rest (who are associate members) shows that this is a far more cost-effective way of sharing information, updates than having the face to face meeting. Will the board adopt this forum type strategy to engage more regularly with affiliate members as an effective way of communicating with interested independent supportive parties?

8.2 response: Following a successfully virtual AGM, we will explore this format for the future. This will require us to do an equality impact assessment to ensure inclusion for a range of people with different needs. We will explore with the National Representative how we can have more regular discussions.

8.3: Partnerships – two questions:

First question:

Maybe worth contacting disability development officers across UK as they have links to their Community Cohesion Officers??

Second question:

And engaging more county sports partnerships to promote in activities as PD UK, although as groups. I'm guessing most of us are already registered there.

8.3 response: Thanks for the feedback. We do have links to country sports partnerships and will continue to work with them. We will explore collaboration with Community Cohesion Officers.

Document Ends