

The ITF Board of Directors gathered in New York for its third in person meeting of 2022. During the meeting the Board covered multiple strategic items.

ITF BUSINESS ITEMS

Governance Review

The ITF Board previously committed to clarify, rationalise and simplify the current written ITF Constitution and to bring recommended changes to the 2022 AGM. Through an extensive consultation process with National Associations (NAs) and Regional Affiliates (RAs) via surveys, webinars and direct consultation, a review of the various responses was provided to the Board. The Board discussed all the aspects of the proposed changes. The Board made recommendations for changes to address concerns heard through the consultation process, before further consultation with the NAs and consideration by the Constitutional Committee prior to final proposals being discussed for inclusion in the 2022 AGM Agenda.

Code of Ethics

The Board received a report from the Chair of the Ethics Commission and were advised that they would be called upon later in the year, following final drafting, to review and approve changes to the Code of Ethics, Candidate Rules and Terms of Reference.

The Board were advised that the term of the Chair of the Ethics Commission, Sandra Osborne QC, expires on 2 November 2022. In accordance with the current Terms of Reference, the Board retains the power to reappoint the Chair. The Board discussed the matter and agreed to reappoint Sandra Osborne QC for a further term of two years. They also requested further consideration be given in the coming months to the appointment process for the wider ethics commission membership, to ensure greater diversity and staggering of terms.

Player Pathway strategic plans

The Board was presented extensive strategic plan for the WTT Player Pathway to drive change to realise long term vision for the Tours. Aims of the plan include delivering equally for women's tennis as for men's tennis at all levels of the pathway; and to ease the financial burden for players through improved scheduling and the provision of more hospitality. The desire to consistently innovate to attract and retain players on the pathway while reducing integrity risks and delivering a sustainable future remains an overarching aim. The provision of best-in-class standards and services across the WTT and substantially raise the profile of the WTT thereby elevating its commercial appeal will both be a major focus.

The Board approved the introduction of a new W40 category from January 2023 and approved in principle numerous other enhancements for the WTT.

ITF WTT Juniors

The strategic plan for 2023 onwards for the WTT Juniors was laid out for the Board. The main aims are: to provide a safe, consistent, cohesive pathway for talented young players of all ages to progress through national, regional and international competition; to build world-leading 18U Tour and Team Competitions to ensure WTT Juniors are the preferred pathway for players and their support teams; and to ensure the WTT Juniors is the partner of choice for the ATP and WTA through identifying and supporting the most elite junior players with suitable services and programmes to support their development and progression into professional tennis.

The Board approved a One-Sport Education approach and introduction of mandatory modules in 2023. The Board also approved a three tier WTT Junior structure and grade name changes for 2023, to bring grading structures in line with other ITF Tours and ATP and WTA.

The Board also approved in principle numerous other enhancements such as: alignment of the 14U team competition with Junior Davis Cup and Junior Billie Jean King Cup branding; a younger (10U – 16U) age group approach; and an elite player progression approach and Tours partnership.

Major Events

Updates were provided on the ITF major events activity related to Davis Cup, Billie Jean King Cup, Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Board was pleased to receive positive reports on several ongoing discussions with stakeholders around these events. Further updates would be provided at the next in person meeting.

Padel Tennis

The Board further discussed the matter of Padel Tennis as previously consulted with National Associations earlier in the year and resolved that the matter should be brought to the 2022 ITF AGM.

AGM Matters

The Board reviewed matters to submit to the 2022 ITF AGM: Nominees for Awards for Services to the Game, applications to transfer from Class C to Class B membership and applications for an increase in shares. The Board's recommendations will be put to the Council in the AGM Agenda which will be issued one month prior to the AGM.

Dave Haggerty
President