

Meeting Notes of England Athletics South West Region Council Meeting held Monday 9th December via Zoom at 19:00

In attendance:

Richard Llewellyn-Eaton (Chair), David Cooke, Graham Berry, John Deaton, Paul D'Arcy, Keith Reed (Competitions group admin), Richard Ayling, David Little, Mick Morris, Alex Copping, Mike Hindle, Fiona Edlington, Keith Brackstone. Brian Baker. Chris Jones CEO England Athletics

Apologies:

Sonya Ellis, Dave Varney

1. Review of Awards evening – RLE thanked Rich Ayling, Sarah Friday, Emma Hurst, Dave Cooke and star interviewer, Keith Reed for all their efforts in putting on the virtual events. Rich Ayling also passed on his thanks and said he had received some nice email from the recipients. Trophies will be distributed as soon as practically possible.
2. EA National Council meeting of Nov 25th [JD/ Chris Jones
RLE welcomed Chris Jones to the meeting. John Deaton gave an update on the National Council meeting and Chis also commented on the meeting outcomes
Regional elections will take place in spring of 2021. We have two vacancies with one up for renewal. It will be a more elaborate procedure and it is hoped more people will engage and diversity is to be encouraged. Existing councillors who are up for re-election will need to apply. There will be a new code of conduct for regional councillors in line with the one signed by Chairs.
The UK Members Council are looking currently at their role and how they link with home countries.

Chris Jones thanked the National Council for their excellent work during the past months of the pandemic. The working relationship has been good and helped everyone in a difficult period
Chris also praised the Regional councils who had assisted the sport locally and worked well with the full time staff to support clubs.

3. UK/EA/AREAS meeting of Dec 8th
Richard gave a brief update of his feedback to this meeting. It is an unusual situation in the SW with which county supports which area. Dorset and Wiltshire tend to go to competitions in the South whereas Gloucester and Avon go to the Midlands. The other areas tend to be split by clubs.
Chis Jones said that although traditionally EA had supported the old territories structure this may not be the case going forward and regions and other competition providers could get more support to put on competitions
Also Inter Region competitions may be encouraged. Martin Rush is leading on this and will consult with us as a council.
4. Chris gave an update on England Athletics.
It had obviously been a difficult year since Covid and has resulted in a restructuring with 21 redundancies. However the financial position is not as bleak as first feared. Affiliations are only 70% when compared to 2019.
There have been lots of positives like competitions returning on the track (over 300 events licensed) and also road races and now cross country returning.
It is important that going forward we learn lessons from this year and try to find solutions to problems through working in a different way,
Another positive has been the use of technology to work more efficiently. This has allowed EA staff to work from home and also allow better access to clubs. It is likely that this could be a permanent change allowing a review of the main office to take place.
Coaching and official courses have gone on line and this has gone down well. And the recent awards evening were watched by 9000 people (much wider coverage than usual). There have also been webinars and resources for coaches and clubs online. There will be limited Indoor events this season and no national championships. This will save money which can be redistributed to the clubs.

Going forward there is much to look forward to with the Commonwealth Games in 2022 in Birmingham, This is a separate funding stream but it is hoped that a legacy of facilities can happen after the event. Funding from Sport England will continue up to 2022 and EA are hopeful for more support from Government after that because of the health benefits of our sport.

There is now a clear working relationship with UKA and a joint strategy has been agreed. EA will launch their own strategy in April. There will be challenges ahead but we should look forward to a better future. Chris thanked the council for all its hard work.

Graham Berry asked about having two national stadia post 2022. Chris thought that it would be sensible to use Birmingham more but this is a matter for UKA.

David Little felt that an indoor facility was need for the SW. Chris and Rich Ayling both felt this was likely to be difficult for cost reasons but we should look at a multi- sport approach having a training type of venue. Dome options may be a cost effective solution.

Paul D'Arcy proposed a vote of thanks for the support given to competitions this summer by EA. It was much appreciated by all the competition providers.

5. Improving contact with EA members in the SW Region

Richard felt that we need to find a better way forward to directly communicate with the athletes in the clubs as often things do not get beyond club secretaries. It was hoped we could work together with EA to find a solution. RLE thanked Chris Jones for attending.

6. Track & Field 2021 – WE discussed a potential date for the 2021 event subject to Covid. We reviewed the latest draft of the fixture calendar from UKA and it was felt that 18th July is the best date. Although it clashes with the CAU Champs it was felt that we would still have a good entry. There were also concerns raised about the YDL Lower Area finals being held the day before but this is by no means certain. It was agreed that we should provisionally book Exeter Arena. KR to distribute latest UKA fixtures but it should be noted that it is still a draft document.

7. Indoor events –as already said there will be none in this region (or Wales) but Sheffield & Lee Valley will hold open events. The UK champs will be held in Glasgow with limits on entries;

8. XC Licensing [KR]; There have been three events so far applied for a license in the South West. One being our own SW event and the other is the Devon County Champs in Exeter, An application has been sent in by the North Devon XC League for an event on 31st January.

9. Road Running Champs. The Gloucester 10K will take place on 24th January but at. Castle Coombe motor racing circuit. It was agreed that we would use this as the SW Road Running Championships.

10 South West Cross country Update – RLE thanked everyone who have made this event possible. We are now in apposition to open entries on 10th December.

Paul D'Arcy gave an update on the venue permissions and we have approval to put it on. There are a few issues to be resolved but hopefully they will not be anything that will stop us.

AOB - Several members asked about the potential for an indoor facility in the South West. Probably the only possibilities are sharing with other sports to cover an existing area or to find an obsolete aircraft hanger....though these tend to be re-purposed for commercial uses.

The meeting closed at 9pm

RLE/KBR

10th December 2020