

**Meeting Notes of England Athletics South West Region Council Meeting held Wednesday 13th January 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, Mick Morris, Mike Hindle, Fiona Edlington, Brian Baker, Sonya Ellis, Dave Varney**

**Apologies:**

**Keith Brackstone.**

**1. Welcome**

Richard welcomed everyone to the meeting and hoped everyone was well in these difficult times.

**2. Matters arising from last meeting** – Nothing raised that would not be covered elsewhere.

**3. SW Cross Country**

We had already decided to postpone the event to February 21<sup>st</sup> but with the new lockdown this was now not a realistic option. The decision was taken to cancel for 2021.

It was agreed we would encourage entrants to carry over their fee to 2022 but also to allow refunds. This has to be done via jotform and dealt with by Paul D'Arcy. It could be an onerous task so patience will be needed by entrants.

John Deaton will update the website and KR will send an email to all entrants.

We will need to look at the 2022 event in terms of cost after the large fee was requested for the use of Merryfield. Aldon Hill is probably not an option for the future. There is a new potential venue in the pipeline also in Somerset.

Paul D'Arcy will continue dialogue with Merryfield and RLE will talk to medical providers about level of cover and costs

**4. Cross Country Distance survey**

UKA have recently sent out a survey to athletes and other interested parties about the equalisation of distances for males and females taking part in cross country events.

A healthy debate ensued with different opinions. Some are listed below:

Leagues and counties felt that the provision of extra races was precluded by daylight hours [set up; run 10/12 races; remove the course; tidy up and clean any facility; all in daylight]; We need to consider the welfare of officials if another hour or more is added to the day. If two distances are offered at each meeting.(a long course and a short course) it would mean teams would be weakened and make league scoring very difficult. Perhaps alternating is better. We need to consider the U17W and U20W who often run with the women in leagues and county championship events. There are small enough numbers already and longer distances would discourage many from taking part.

Women, and indeed Men, could nominate their race distance for leagues etc. for a season, with maybe both sexes counting towards one team score;

Perhaps the whole debate has come back because those seeking distance equality only participate in seniors only meetings, or only run their race without realising the knock on effect on a whole meeting;

A number of these thoughts came from the women on the Regional Council.

Overall the principle was accepted but the practicalities would need to be looked at. It was felt that a full debate must be held involving all competition providers as well as athletes.

**5. Road Championships and Relays**

The Gloucester 10K which is the SW Inter Counties event will now be held on 21<sup>st</sup> November at Quedgeley. It was agreed that we would support the event with medals and encourage our County teams to enter.

It is still hoped to have the SW Relay Championships within the Cleeve event in August, John Deaton speak to event organiser.

## 6. **Track and Field 2021**

We hope to be able to go ahead with the SW Championships and Inter Counties on July 18<sup>th</sup> at Exeter. David Cooke has circulated draft standards and is trying to see how county selections can be managed around these standards. This will depend on numbers being allowed to attend.

RLE has booked the Exeter Arena provisionally for this date.

With regard to the SW Athletic League the picture is far from clear but they will look at possible making booking to various tracks to allow a more regional approach if that is required. We hope the situation will be clearer in the next month or so.

## 7. **Council elections**

The elections will be held in April, with communication coming out from EA very soon.

We have one vacancy plus a possible re-election for Graham Berry.

We would welcome interest from anyone on the current group in particular who are not an elected member.

## 8. **EA Update and National issues**

There have been no National Council meetings since our last meeting.

Rich Ayling gave an update on the current activity.

- Run Leader Development Workshops are starting with a high level of interest. They will be held over 5 session.
- EA courses are now mostly online with some future mixed delivery planned if allowed. There has obviously been a backlog in education due to the pandemic particularly with LIRF courses. This could have an impact on clubs and volunteer recruitment this year.
- EA staff are heavily involved in strategic planning for 2021 and beyond. It is likely to be an Evolution rather than a Revolution.
- We all need to embrace the new digital age we are in as part of the legacy of Covid.
- There is a need to involve clubs and counties with the new combined strategy with UKA. The challenge is how to engage people through online forums to ensure a balanced view from all parts of the sport. It was suggested by RLE that a county based approach may be a good starting point.

## 9. **AOB**

- Sony Ellis mentioned the new starting rules relating to Endurance events. KR agreed to find out more background info
- Fiona Edlington asked if event organisers could encourage more Race walking events
- John Deaton asked about how the new rule changes were being communicated to facilities. Rich Ayling agreed to find out the process of communication.

## 10. **Date of Next meeting**

**Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 7pm by Zoom**

The meeting closed at 8.15pm

RLE/KBR