

Meeting Notes of England Athletics South West Region Council Meeting held on Wednesday 31st August via Zoom at 19.00

In attendance:

Richard Llewellyn-Eaton (Chair), John Deaton, Paul D’Arcy, Keith Reed (Competitions group admin), Sonya Ellis, Dave Varney, Richard Ayling (EA), Phil Lucker, David Cooke, Fiona Edington, Anne Wafula-Strike (EA Diversity Champion)

1. Apologies:

David Little, Brian Baker, Elliot Prince. Mike Hindle

Welcome

Richard welcomed everyone to the meeting and especially Anne Wafula-Strike.

2. Matters Arising No matters were arising not covered elsewhere.

3. Inclusivity and Diversity

We were extremely fortunate to have Anne Wafula-Strike (Board Member for Diversity in attendance. Anne gave us an insight into the issues that many athletes from minority groups face when trying to get into athletics.

There is a Diversity Action Plan in place and also one from UKA. [available on EA / UKA websites]. Anne said whilst it is good that these documents exist they need to be backed up by actions. There are without doubt some good work being done but it is nowhere near enough.

She said Inclusion is an act whereas Diversity is a fact. There are numerous examples where athletes have been excluded from taking part in athletics due to a disability in particular. This is often due to poor facilities and poor access. There needs to be a greater understanding of the needs of people by clubs, coaches and officials. This is often due to financial constraints, but not solely.

In the SW we have some good work going on. Sonya said more research is needed into what is going on and this needs to be better communicated. We need a more co-ordinated approach so that people are aware of what is available to them. It was felt that more could be done but there are restraints imposed by NGB’s. When the SW was an autonomous region it was easier to support initiatives and drive change. We need a better understanding nationally of the SW as a region and the issues we face.

It was agreed we should come up with a Regional Diversity plan and Anne is happy to help us discuss this with the EA Chair and CEO. From the discussions the wider issues in the SW were discussed and it was agreed this would be highlighted within the plan. Overall it was an excellent discussion and Anne will be great help to the region in highlighting the successes and the issues we face.

4. EA update

We discussed the Volunteer awards and our presentation event. This is now confirmed as Saturday 26th November at the Devon Hotel. WE are planning a conference but it earlier in the day. Nominations have closed and we have received a good number of awards in all the categories for the SW. Richard Ayling will now collate and send out to the panel ahead of the selection meeting later this month.

John Deaton attended the last National Council meeting. Marc Ritchie (Technical Officials Manager) was in attendance. Discussions were held on the possible increase in athlete’s fees and the future Competition review. John also gave information on the issues with the UK CAU and the fact there is doubt about future Inter-Counties events. Richard reminded elected council members to send in their skills matrix to Lynette Smith (not Melanie Bicknell)

5. SW Track and Field

The 2022 Track & Field event was held on Sunday 24th July at Exeter. Overall it was a very successful day with a good turnout overall. Some events and age groups turnouts were poor and we may need to look at standards for 2023. The medals were distributed well but we could do better with extra people and WiFi access. This can be looked at for 2023 along with the possible use of an Online entry system that allows live access to results on the day. We need to agree on a date for 2023 once fixtures are out. We need a better buy in from some of our counties. It would appear athletes like the thought of representing their county but all counties need to improve their selection and team management.

There is too much confusion among some athletes and parents about their selection for a county. KR to contact counties to get their feedback.

6. SW Road Events

Dave Phillips and Emma Stepto have been having further discussions with the various county road representatives. Avon will not be taking part although they have a new Road Running rep on their County Executive. It has now been confirmed that we will include an Inter County event in the Chippenham Half Marathon on 18th September. Unfortunately the Road Relays were not held as part of the Cleeve Relays in late August. John Deaton still has the medals

7. London Mini Marathon

Dave Varney and Sonya gave the update on the London Mini Marathon Trials which were held in Taunton on 21st August. Thanks to Richard Llewellyn-Eaton for all his hard work with putting them on. There will be a selection meeting held to confirm final selection. The actual race will be on the Saturday this year over 2.6 km. Sonya has the details

8. Cross Country

Paul has received the permission to use RNAS Merryfield again in 2023. The date will be 8th January. There are still some paperwork to be sorted and also confirmation of the final cost. This is expected to be similar to last year.

We agreed to keep the entry fee the same as 2022 and Yeovil have kindly agreed to use the same entry system as last year (Jotform). Course as 2022.

KR will apply for the EA License

9. SW Indoor Events

RLE has been in contact with Welsh Athletics about future dates for indoor fixtures and the potential hosting of SW Championships. He was informed that dates are not yet confirmed.

Disappointment was expressed about the lack of SW involvement in the recent Representative match held at Swansea. There were teams from North, Midland and South but very few SW athletes were selected. Sonya agreed to contact Welsh Athletics about future invites from the SW and the Indoor Championships.

10. Finances and CIC

We have awarded the £1000 contributions to both Yeovil and Exeter towards the Electronic Starting system they have purchased. Any further applications will be processed once the kit has been received.

The Yeovil system was used successfully at the SW Track and Field Championships.

We need to renew the Zoom license (£143) and buy more lanyards for the medals

KR has been in contact with a company concerning the CIC. Richard Ayling will also supply a possible contact we use.

11. AOB None.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm

Date of Next meeting – TBC

KR/RLE