

Meeting Notes of England Athletics South West Region Council Meeting held on Zoom on Wednesday 21st February (7pm)

In attendance:

Paul D’Arcy (chair), John Deaton, Keith Reed, Richard Ayling, Elliot Prince, Richard Llewellyn-Eaton, Brian Baker, Debbie Brooks, Roland Gibbard, Karen Robiliard, Sonya Ellis, Charlotte Phillips

1. Welcome and apologies:

Paul D’Arcy welcomed everyone and thanked everyone for their attendance.

Apologies received from, **Sarah Massey, Holly Newman, David Cooke**

2. Matters Arising.

Nothing raised

3. Age Group Changes.

Following the inclusion of the changes into the 2026 rulebook to enhance the understanding of how the changes will be implemented it was agreed that a number of Regional EA Age Group Forums should be held.

They will take place as follows:

- i. 3rd April East
- ii. 5th April North East
- iii. 8th April East Mids
- iv. 10th April South East
- v. 12th April South West – Hosted By Paul D’Arcy
- vi. 15th April West Mids
- vii. 17th April London
- viii. 19th April North West
- ix. 22nd April Yorks and Humberside

In addition, there will be a series of Webinars to further understand the issues.

<https://www.englandathletics.org/news/england-athletics-to-host-age-group-webinars/>

It was hoped that by discussions some opposition to the changes could be alleviated.

4. SW Cross Country

The event took place on Sunday 7th January. Although numbers were a bit down overall the event went well.

The course was very wet and tough but some of the races were a little short in distance.

Paul thanked everyone for their efforts in putting the event on. KR to issue financial breakdown.

Donation made to RNAS Merryfield and new signs purchased.

Brian Baker has suggested we should look at alternative venues but it is very difficult to find a venue with enough parking etc. A decision will have to be made later this year.

5. Structure and Role of Athletics SW Ltd (Update)

Sarah has made some progress Here is an update sent by her

We have two options:

1. Set up limited company and then convert to CIC
2. Set up the limited company and CIC status at the same time

1. Set up limited company and then convert to CIC

This option will be quicker as registering with Companies House is straightforward and it means that ASW would be a legal entity almost immediately and satisfies the desire to have a more formal arrangement from a governance and financial perspective

In order to do this, I would just need the following:

- Name of company
- Address of company
- Directors and company secretary
- Guarantor (at least one needed)
- Memorandum and Articles of Association - I will draft and send to you for approval. We will also need to choose an appropriate SIC code which I will look into as well.

This will cost £12 for initial set up plus £25 to then convert

2. Set up of limited company by guarantee with CIC status at the same time

As a reminder a CIC is a special type of Limited Company which exists to benefit the community rather than private shareholders. It does not have any special tax status. The attached two-page doc outlines the benefits v's a limited company only (section 13)

It is essentially a limited company but with some additional documents needed:

- A 'community interest statement', explaining what we plan to do
- an 'asset lock' - this is just a statement promising assets will only be used for social objectives
- a constitution as opposed to the Articles of Association for a Limited Company
- Be approved by the Community Interest Company regulator.

These are not all that complicated and there are standard templates to use.

The cost is £35

Also just to note that as well as filing accounts each year you also have to satisfy the Community Interest test. Everyone needs to pass their opinion to Paul and Sarah.

6. CSM - EA Update

Richard Ayling gave an update on the following:

Club standards

Richard had sent an email out to all on the SW Council asking for help with chasing up clubs who are struggling with the process

In the SW we have 190 clubs and 135 of them have achieved at least 4 out of the 7 standards.

This is not too bad when compared to other regions.

Richard stated that certain club standards will become mandatory for club registration in 2025

This will of course will have implications for clubs who don't comply and their members.

It was felt that there should be a regional meeting about the subject and all clubs invited.

Sonya said that EA needs to look at the criteria for small and virtual clubs as they may not fit.

Richard thanked the councillors for their help so far on this issue.

Richard will attend Yeovil on the weekend of the Somerset County Championships.

Richard also gave an update on the 2024 Volunteer Awards.

An email will be sent out outlining the proposed changes to this year's awards.

There will be hopefully a live vote on certain categories on the night.

The intention is to make it a more dynamic event.

The target for nominations is lower this year with the emphasis on quality. Last years the SW had the largest number of nominations.

The suggested date for the SW event will be 28th September at the same venue as last year.

We agreed to put on a Conference again. We should share ideas with other regions.

Hall of Fame will be on November 2nd – award winners will be invited.

7. Chair Update - EA issues

i. Review of Skills Matrix –Paul has sent this out and all Council members are asked to complete.

ii. Leshia Hawkins who would have been our Board representative has now left the EA board so happening – need to discuss further with EA Board

iii. LiRF courses – from regional funding – It was suggested that there are enough courses online but it would be good to hold more workshops for those attending at local venues.

iv. Welfare Officer Courses Although some comments about this course availability had been raised it would appear that to register and qualify is straightforward – YOAC now have 3

v. Officials / Coaching transition - There are unfortunately still a large number who still not confirmed the T&C of their license since the transfer from UKA to EA. This does need to be done by June otherwise they risk being removed from the database.

vi. We have now elected Sonya Ellis as our Council Member with the Coaching portfolio holder. Paul will liaise with Sonya on this.

vii. As stated in Richard Ayling's report the 2nd Nov is the date of the 24 Hall of Fame awards

viii. Hosting of Race Director Courses in SW – Roland G gave an update.

A successful one was held in Cornwall funded by Cornwall Road Running Group. 8 clubs were represented. Roland is happy on out on others in the Region. We need to increase awareness of the importance of such a course.

ix. RC Questionnaire –Paul said he had expected this to be sent out to all councillors.

x. EA Council meeting – The National EA council meeting will be held on 24th April in Yate.

We have been asked to have our Regional Council meeting at the same venue on the previous evening.

We can cover travel expenses of any attendees. Hope to offer Zoom option as well.

8. AOB

UKA have asked us to hold a Regional meeting on the World Calls Programme hosted by Jack Buckner, CEO We have managed to book Exeter Harriers clubhouse on 19th March. Details to follows.

Paul suggested we should do some public congratulations to athletes who have performed well at National level this winter. Sonya is happy to help identify suitable athletes.

Paul has had recent discussion with Marc Ritchie about Officials Development. We are to be a pilot area. Officials have been contacted about getting involved as Champions.

The Sapphire League format is being sent out. There are 20 meetings included.

Sonya said she had approved 10 track meeting licenses. The London Mini Marathon process is underway. A selection meeting will be held early in March.

John Deaton asked if we had a cancellation policy for our events following recent cancellations of events.

Charlotte Phillips said a lot of parents have complained about the EA website and how difficult it can be to use. RA to pass this comment

Keith said there is an Officials course on Saturday 23rd March in Exeter

Roland Gibbard gave an update of the SW Road Running Championships

It was hoped to use the Langley Burrell 10K and Chippenham Half again with the possible addition of a 5K or a Marathon. Discussion ongoing with SW Counties.

KR asked about the possibility of a Road Relay at RNAS Merryfield. It was agreed to discuss further

Roland also asked about a Race that wanted to be Licensed by both Run Britain and ARC.

This has happened before but the question of Insurance cover needs to be raised. Roland to talk to Race Director.

9. Date of Next meetings will be 23rd April at Yate Athletics Clubhouse. Time TBC