

Meeting Notes of England Athletics South West Region Council Meeting held on Wednesday 8th September 2025 by Zoom, 19:00 start.

In attendance:

Paul D’Arcy (chair), John Deaton, Debbie Brooks, Richard Ayling, Karen Robilliard, Brian Baker, David Cooke, Richard Llewellyn-Eaton

Keith Reed (ASW Only)

1. Welcome and apologies:

Paul D’Arcy welcomed everyone. Apologies received from David Cooke and Sonya Ellis.

2. Matters Arising.

Nothing raised from previous meeting; Debbie B kindly attended a main Council Chairs meeting 1st Sept on Paul’s behalf when he was ill.

Debbie’s notes circulated from meeting detailed EA affiliation fees and regional council action plans. Also noted that the previous EA affiliation price increase (2024) raised an extra £180,000 in new revenue which will allow more Club Support Managers (CSMs). Currently there are only 4 or 5 that cover the whole county (Rich A being one of them for SW and currently Midlands too).

Alongside the discussion on EA athlete fee increase was noted that at Northen Athletics (NA) funding streams are different. Athletes pay a separate £2 fee to NA towards competition costs. So NA would like a reduction. There is also the extra fee unattached athletes should be making to compete at some events (CC is one type), organisers are not necessarily collecting this.

This was also noted recently at a UKA members meeting Roland attended, lots of athletes not paying the £2 levy for not being affiliated.

No final decision yet on what the athlete price increase will be but looking most likely £3 increase for 2026 season, new fee of £23. With club AGM’s looming need to get a final decision very soon or could impact club fees.

3. Age Group changes update – queries regarding rules raised by John D

Microphone probs, he spoke during AOB section

4. South West Club Forum, EA Awards and Welfare Forums

Rich A, plans all place. From 12pm onwards suite open for buffet style, light refreshments. After a brief intro from

1-4pm main forum session.

24 people signed up so far, encourage everyone to sign up so we can get the catering right.

We are looking for help from committee members leading a table.

For the evening awards session, Paul D will give the intro. Trophies are all in place. Similar running order to last year with Jo P reading out the nominations. Council members will be asked to help present.

Rich A, then went on to ask if we can invite SW clubs to “dial in” to our planned November (12th) zoom meeting as we are being encouraged by EA to have an “open council session” regarding “the safer club forum”. Rich A suggested open session 6:30-7.15pm, then our council meeting 7:15-8pm?

As clubs in the SW have implemented a club standard 6, including welfare officer, going forward Rich will look at more virtual training especially around welfare officer recruitment.

There is already a welfare forum available online to book onto - 26th Nov. Hannah at “Active Devon” keen to support work on safer clubs, planning a practical workshop in the Plymouth/Armada area.

Roland asks a question to Rich A, as SW clubs are now pretty good at encompassing Club standard 6, change welfare officer to proactive rather than a reactive, think about who is utilised within clubs.

Rich A confirmed to Keith that athlete awards will be presented at clubs, most likely in the New Year.

5. SW Road Running Championships - Roland G

This year probably Langley Burrell 10k at Chippenham will be used but the feedback from Devon and Cornwall athletes is that they won't travel unless there is more SW competition. Similar for this weekend at the Chippenham Half, Roland will be in attendance as usual though.

Paul D asked if there was a venue within the SW that would encourage more SW athletes to attend?

Generally agreed West Devon most likely the best area. Probably worthwhile asking the individual counties to get an idea. Roland agreed to setup a short questionnaire for Paul to send out.

Paul suggested, should we put on a bespoke champs.? Rich L-E M5 area Taunton/ Exeter would be the most sensible. Doesn't really matter what time of year, although Spring is very busy with Relays series. Roland prefers to wait for feedback from the counties otherwise could have a clash.

Roland pointed out that there are road races nearly every weekend, hard pressed to find a gap in the calendar. Rich L-E; could incorporate into an existing event, with a small number allowed from each county, Taunton 10k is end Sept, Bridgwater possible too, as they run a 10k and HM at the same time, so could complete both champs on same day.

Roland to look at Bridgwater for 2026.

6. CSM / EA Update – RA

Rich has been working with Whitehall track at Bristol. They are looking at council to ring fence funding to preserve the facility.

7. Chair Update

a. Make-up of the RC and Attendance – New interest?

Chair thanked Debbie for helping out recently. Chair asked the rest of those present to contact a couple of Council members whom we have not seen at meetings for close to 12 months, to ask if they wish to continue on the RC. Plus does anyone know any other suitable candidates.

b. Skill Matrix

There are 2 new columns "Digital/cyber security awareness" and "Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) and Sustainability". Chair asked to ensure the committee members update their skills, so matrix can be forwarded to Sam O'Shea, Board and NED Secretary.

c. SWICXC Champs – Venue decision

A decision needs to be made asap on location plus SW Schools is a week later. Rich L-E and Brian B visited the site at Bath and West, a pro and cons document circulated amongst council members, comparing Merryfield, Cricket St Thoams and Bath & West sites. After a long discussion between several Council members it was agreed that Merryfield comes out as most favourable location over all, as supported by document Rich L-E and Brian had prepared.

Paul conceded that he needed to start paperwork tomorrow and was confident that a local on-site sponsor would be found that could ease any issues arising with the Naval security team.

Keith R, just a thought before we order the medals, are we looking to change the design? Order takes 3-5 weeks so we have time if we would like a re-design. No thoughts expressed at the time, Keith to forward current medal design to council members. Would affect indoor and outdoor champs, but have enough for this year's indoors, so would be from Jan XC champs onwards.

Rich L-E, a few things to think about, how are we going to run the SW Champs with the age cat changes? What are the issues and how will we overcome them?

Regarding SW league and SWIC dates, the following will have an impact on senior official availability.

Commonwealth Games 27/7 to 2/8 (10 days)

European Champs 10/8/ to 16/8

Currently looking at 19/7 for SWIC, but will have an idea of SWL dates to circulate at the AGM on 27th Sept.

d. Club Improvement Grants Scheme.

Opens on 15th Sept, up to £500 per club available, please get your applications in asap.

8. DONM

Wed 12th November 2025

9. AOB

Roland – When a track no longer meets Track Mark standards, is it still covered insurance wise? Costs of getting a track resprayed after the usual 7-8 yrs is costly. One of the main issues track owners aren't putting funding aside. The business model doesn't stack up. Athletes pay modest fees which doesn't cover track maintenance and future proof future costs.

Yesterday at Exeter athletes were slipping on the main javelin runup. Around 110mH start line track is "bubbling" once again on several lanes.

EA starting to put together a Race Directors course, possibly at Plymouth.

Several of us noticed the embarrassing situation at the Great North Run, where medals and T-shirts were emblazoned with a map of Sunderland rather than Newcastle.

Rich L-E asked when Plymouth race directors course will be finalised as not heard yet. Price for attending is £75. Cornwall RR network already helps Cornish members, perhaps Armada Network can help Devon interested parties.

John D to send info through to Keith.

Rich L-E – Looking at details for age categories for next year (including relays). (RC supplied with list of rule queries for 2026 from John D highlighting the main areas so far). In general, U13 events will change to U14 events with potential exceptions noted on document supplied by John.

U13 ► U14

U15 ► U16

U17 ► U18

Suggestions for 1200m SC for U14 without water jump, so only lowest level barriers.

Yes for U14 hammer

U14 Triple jump - restrictive run up (max 10 steps)

Scott Grace at EA is looking at working documents.

Paul D – Congratulated Amy Joynes, Yeovil AC and Richard Maddock, North Somerset AC who have both recently gained their level 3 in field officiating.

Rich A – The consultant involved with Kings Park, Bournemouth recommends legal to resolve the only issues around the future of the facility.

Paul D –will gather a group together for SWIC changes for 2026.

DONM – Wed 12th November 2025

Meeting close : 20:15