

## Consultation on the Formal Membership of UK Athletics

### Information for England Athletics Affiliated Clubs and Member Bodies

Dear Club Secretary,

In November 2020, together with the other three Home Country Athletics Federations (HCAFs) and UK Athletics (UKA), we announced a [new 12-year strategy](#) for athletics and running across the whole of the UK.

Alongside this new strategy, reflecting our shared commitment to a collaborative approach, the five organisations have established a new partnership framework that includes new approaches to ways of working across the organisations to develop athletics across the UK, to create alignment, to make the best use of resources, and to ensure there is accountability for the delivery of the strategy.

As part of the changes to its governance, the UK Athletics Annual General Meeting on 11 December 2020 passed several resolutions to amend its Articles of Association to enable each HCAF to nominate a director to the UK Athletics Board. This change has now been implemented giving the Board of England Athletics the ability to appoint a director to the Board of UK Athletics. Experienced official and club volunteer, Peter Crawshaw, has agreed to fulfil this role. England Athletics has had a position for UK Athletics on its Board since its inception and is delighted that this has now been filled by Anne Wafula-Strike.

### Membership structure of UK Athletics

It was agreed at the UK Athletics AGM in December that, in accordance with the recommendations of the external Review of UK Athletics ([the Street Report](#)), detailed proposals would be formulated to enable formal consultation with the Sport on the future legal membership of UK Athletics, formerly known as the UK Members Council (UKMC), now known as UKA Members. To date, this body performs two distinct roles:

**Role 1.** The formal legal membership of the Company is compulsory: its function is the same as exists in any Company Limited by Guarantee – including England Athletics – that which in a Company Limited by Shares would be carried out by the “shareholders”. This has the standard powers under the law and Articles, as follows:

- to receive the annual financial statements and reports of the activities of the Company from the Board
- to amend the Articles of Association (effectively, the constitution of the company)
- to remove directors by ordinary resolution
- to appoint the Auditors and fix their remuneration

**Role 2.** An advisory “council”, which is optional: its function is to receive information, debate issues, act as a sounding board, and act as ambassadors. This function has no decision-making powers.

Currently, the people who constitute both the “formal membership” and the council group comprise:

- President and Vice President
- one representative of each of the four HCAFs
- three persons elected by “Affiliated Clubs” (which are in effect, each of the member clubs of the HCAFs)
- one person elected by road runners
- one person elected by senior coaches
- one person elected by senior officials
- chair of the Athletes Commission
- any person from the United Kingdom serving as a World Athletics Council Member who elects to be a UKA Member, and
- any person from the United Kingdom serving as a committee member on the International Paralympic Committee Athletics Technical Committee who elects to be a UKA Member.

The Street Report identified that there was a consensus, from those interviewed from the Sport, that the two functions being held by the same body of people was confusing and unhelpful.

## The Consultation

This consultation is concerned primarily with Role 1: the formal legal membership of the company, UK Athletics. It is a consultation being conducted with all the clubs and other formal members of England Athletics. (The other HCAFs are conducting their own consultations with their members on this matter.)

In seeking the views of the England Athletics membership, we are encouraging all our members to consult widely within their own club or association so as to ensure we receive the most reliable indication of how our members wish us to seek to have this matter resolved. (N.B. The ultimate decision will be taken by the current UKA Members of which we are only one - see above - but we would anticipate your views will carry weight with other members).

We have added a [table of information on the England Athletics website that sets out some options for formal membership of UK Athletics](#) going forward. The England Athletics Board has determined not to propose any specific preference in order not to bias the outcome of the consultation. A [draft timetable for consultation](#) can also be viewed on the website along with details of a Q&A webinar (on Thursday 18 March 7pm) and a link to the consultation survey (deadline 5 April 2021).

## Background

A starting point for considering this issue, is to identify with clarity the roles and responsibilities of UK Athletics. This is clearly set out in the UK Sport review of UK Athletics, and is the approach that has been taken between the five organisations: 'UKA should only do what only UKA can (most effectively) do'.

UK Athletics exists to carry out roles and responsibilities that the HCAFs (for and on behalf of their respective members, whose interests they represent) either cannot do at HCAF level, or because the bodies agree for them to be done at UK level for reasons of efficiency or consistency (as was highlighted as being the case in the recent independent review of Safeguarding).

On this basis, UK Athletics carries out defined roles and responsibilities as decided, and agreed, with the HCAFs. Through this approach, the Sport can be sure that UK Athletics is only doing what UK Athletics can (most effectively) do. Examples of the roles and responsibilities that the HCAFs require a UK level organisation to do currently include being the World Athletics member, coordinating the UK wide rules of competition and for organising major UK broadcast events. Clarity of the roles and responsibilities between the HCAFs and UK Athletics will be the subject of further debate over the next 12 months.

Through this approach, the "collegiate" and collaborative way of working required by our Sport can be achieved, whether roles and responsibilities are carried out by the HCAF itself (for which it is accountable to its members), or through UK Athletics (accountable to the HCAFs, and therefore through to their members).

## Formal membership options

**Option A:** The four HCAFs become the members of UK Athletics, with one vote per each HCAF.

**Option B:** The four HCAFs become the members of UK Athletics, with votes distributed proportionately based on the number of member clubs within each HCAF.

**Option C:** Formal membership is the four HCAFs, together with representatives of constituencies that are considered to fall outside the current HCAF membership models.

**Option D:** All HCAF member clubs to constitute the membership of UK Athletics on a one vote per club basis.

**Option E:** All individuals within the UK athletics community who are affiliated to the HCAFs, for instance registered athletes, coaches and officials, would become members of UK Athletics

Visit our website to [view a table that summarises what may be considered as the possible merits and drawbacks](#) of each of these options.

## Completing the response

There are of course multiple options presented ranging from Option A (smallest) to Option E (largest). The England Athletics Board believe that those presented are the major ones and are those that have been discussed at the current UKA Members' meetings.

In addition to the rating of the five options, if our members wish to offer alternative viable solutions then there is space for further comments within the survey.

England Athletics asks clubs to consult with their members and, once they have come to a conclusion as to their club's preferences, please respond to us by completing the survey form by Monday 5 April.

Visit our website to [access the survey form](#).

## Webinar

Should you have any questions, you will note from the timetable above that **we are holding a webinar on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm** for the purpose of addressing any questions. For any technical queries, please contact [enquiries@englandathletics.org](mailto:enquiries@englandathletics.org)

Thank you for your consideration of this letter and participation in this important consultation.

Yours sincerely

Myra A. Nimmo, Chair of England Athletics, on behalf of the England Athletics Board