

UKA Members – formal membership options

OPTION A

The four HCAFs become the members of UK Athletics (UKA), with one vote per each HCAF.

MERITS

- a) The HCAFs are ultimately accountable, through their membership structures, to their members and, to an extent, to other stakeholders, for many of the roles and responsibilities being carried out for their memberships through UKA.
- b) It has the advantage that decision making and accountability are clear, and that what is agreed between the HCAFs is what will be, rather than UKA having a different set of members who may determine that they wish the organisation to do different things, or do things differently, to what has been set by the HCAFs. Such a situation will only tend to cause confusion.
- c) HCAFs could be considered to provide sufficient representation of coaches and officials, who are predominantly members of their affiliated clubs.
- d) Clubs affiliated to HCAFs have voting rights at HCAF General Meetings (including confirmation of HCAF Board appointments).
- e) It allows all HCAFs equal partnership.

DRAWBACKS

- a) The perspective of a very narrow shareholder base, concentrated into four individuals: could it reasonably be proposed that reducing the number of members to only the HCAFs provides the 'enhanced accountability' contemplated in the Street Review?
- b) These four HCAFs also hold UKA Board seats: is there too great a potential for conflicts of interest with the HCAFs being the sole members and also having nominees on the UKA Board?
- c) The need to determine whether each HCAF should have an equal vote or a vote weighted to reflect the size of the membership it represents may prove contentious. England currently represent c80% of the affiliated clubs / registered athletes.
- d) The existing 'constituencies' of senior coaches and officials, the Athlete Commission, road runners and member clubs are only represented indirectly through the HCAFs.

OPTION B

The four HCAFs become the members of UK Athletics (UKA), with votes distributed proportionately based on the number of member clubs within each HCAF.

The key voting thresholds here are (i) over 50% to pass an ordinary resolution and (ii) 75% to pass a special resolution. Many of the comments on Option A apply.

Additional considerations:

MERITS

- a) As per Option A above, between them, the four HCAFs represent 100 per cent of member clubs across the UK through their membership structures.
- b) There is an argument that voting rights between the HCAFs should reflect the relative sizes of the memberships. On this basis, a measure could be created so that:
 - 1) if one HCAF were three times the size of another, then it would have three times the votes,OR
 - 2) the weighting could be constructed such that England and the other HCAFs would each have a number of votes such that England would have an overall majority but that it would require at least one other HCAF to vote with England in order to pass any special resolutions.

DRAWBACKS

- a) The current constitution has never reflected weighting – at present, the biggest HCAF is only one out of 13 votes if all positions on UKA Members are filled (and more if World Athletics / International Paralympic Committee related positions are taken).
- b) The negotiation on respective voting rights may develop into a detailed analysis of whether some matters are so important to individual HCAFs that these matters need to be exempt from this voting system in order to provide protection for that HCAF. This will be time consuming and could introduce undue complexity.

OPTION C

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

MERITS

- a) This would be a variation of either Option A or B (depending on whether weighting is considered appropriate) and may address a concern that four members (albeit four votes representing each of the four HCAFs) is too narrow a base (see Drawback a) under Option A). The additional members could represent constituencies reflecting their involvement in the Sport (for instance, athlete, coach, technical official, volunteer, club, regional representative).
- b) May avoid having to deal with weighting of HCAF votes, depending on how many additional members are appointed.
- c) Similar to the existing situation - least disruption to current model.
- d) Addresses the concept of having a more "independent" group of members that is more directly representative of different categories of members.

DRAWBACKS

- a) Necessary to determine how many additional members should be appointed, what skills they require, who their appointing constituencies would be, how they are elected and how they communicate with their constituents.
- b) Might be seen as too similar to the current model and thus not satisfy the level of change contemplated by the Street Review.
- c) It has the drawback identified under Merit b) in Option A that UKA Members will be different from, and may make different determinations from, the four HCAFs.
- d) In relation to determination of constituencies, might it be more effective for those making up the constituency to be given rights as non-voting attendees at general meetings of the Company (a form of associate membership)?
- e) This could become quite complex.

If Option C is the preferred approach, it will be necessary to determine the number of representatives and their respective constituencies.

OPTION D

All HCAF member clubs to constitute the membership of UK Athletics (UKA) on a one vote per club basis.

MERITS

- a) This option has logic to it in that, as a member club of an HCAF, it would also automatically become a member club of a UK level body. This has the advantage of creating a clear membership connection between all member clubs in the UK with their UK governing body. At present, all member clubs of HCAFs are non-voting "affiliated member clubs" of UKA, so a change to creating a voting membership would seem a logical step in order to create a greater sense of ownership and engagement between all clubs and UKA.
- b) Avoids the need for any weighting of votes.
- c) Addresses the concept of having a more "independent" group of members.
- d) 100 per cent of member clubs across the UK are directly involved.

DRAWBACKS

- a) Membership, and the financial implications of the membership relationship, is of vital significance to the HCAFs, and that should not be confused by creating common membership. A solution would be to enshrine in the structure that affiliation fees will continue only to be payable to the relevant HCAF and that UKA won't levy fees on clubs or their members.
- b) There is a view that the issues that members need to consider are not now necessarily those within the remit of UKA Members, and are very different to engagement and consultation on sporting issues. Engagement and consultation are vitally important, but it is proposed that these are no longer to be the role of UKA Members and will be addressed through different routes.
- c) At an organisational level, managing relationships at UK level with clubs could be problematic as each country has its unique issues.
- d) A corollary of c) above, it may be challenging to provide to members the information required by them to perform their role and to co-ordinate member responses.

If Option D is the preferred approach, it will be necessary to determine how the organisational challenges can be addressed in order for the members of UKA to be able to carry out their statutory duties appropriately. If these are determined to be too challenging, a compromise might be for all affiliated clubs / associates instead to be granted rights to attend meetings but not have voting rights (a form of associate membership). This would, of course, still leave the question as to which of the other options should then be adopted to form the formal members.

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 (UKA).

MERITS & DRAWBACKS

Largely similar analysis as that for Option D, but with greater levels of organisational and logistical complexity.