

Election Address – Jon Clarke

Firstly, thanks the numerous clubs for the overwhelming support they have given me to nominate me for the Board role, and for the incredible 99 votes I gained in last year's election. Now I again need as much support as I can to get elected, and to represent the need to push for much needed changes in the sport.

For those that do not know me, I am Chairman of West Cheshire AC, Chairman of the EA North West Regional Council, and sit on the EA National Council. I am also North West regional approver for any T&F competition licenses in the area. I am a qualified Coaching Assistant, and Masters athlete competing in Open and Masters events across the country, and for GB at a couple of recent World Masters Athletics Championships.

In the last few years I have become increasingly involved with athletics management, utilising my extensive 30+ years career experience in senior roles and directorships in strategy development and business change, and management.

With your support, I want to push for change and improvements in the strategy, structure, and management of athletics. I am not alone in this, and many that I have spoken to see it as mandatory for the future health of the sport.

Athletics in general, needs to move away from being run by amateurs and by elite athletes, with little or no real business experience. It is essential that the EA Board take on experienced business professionals like myself, ones who are not afraid to make change happen, and have the experience to do it.

Following the disastrous performance of GB in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, the sport saw a massive upheaval and remodeling. The Tokyo games have potentially seen us do even worse. UK Sport and UK Athletics had dumbed down expectations for this year, and the new UKA strategy has even removed such targets in its new strategy to 2032, which in the eyes of many, is a wasted opportunity and doomed to failure, being little more than what is and has been done for the last 25 years. A plan that has spent over £320m, with little to show for it today. Many think the strategies have and will fail, and there needs to a different solution based on lessons learned.

I will listen to anyone, from grass roots upwards, with constructive ideas for the future, including:

- a new strategy that WILL work;
- more accountability and openness from EA;
- setting up new support bodies to the board, similar to the National Council, but ones that are effective.
- an improved structure for the organization of competitions, one which progresses athletes development during the season;
- the setting up a new school and club "gifted and talented" scheme for young athletes with the best prospects;
- the development of new T&F competition formats geared at reducing meeting times
- proactivity to respond to the current officials crisis which EA denies exists.

If you want a voice for change, then please vote for me.