

**ENGLAND ATHLETICS ENGLAND COUNCIL MEETING
OUTCOMES**

11 August 2021

11:00am – 2:30pm Via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Members of the England Council (EC):

Julian Starkey (South East) (JS), EC Chair
Jon Clarke (North West) (JC)
Matthew Dalton (East) (MD)
Adrian Day (London) (AD)
Moira Gallagher (Yorks & Humberside) (MG)
Janice Kaufman (North East) (JK)
Richard Lewellyn-Eaton (South West) (RL) (joined after item 1 and item 6)
Myra Nimmo, EA Board Chair
Jane Pidgeon (East Midlands) (JP)
Stuart Paul (West Midlands) (SP)

England Athletics Officers:

Chris Jones (CJ), CEO
Sam O'Shea (SO), Board and NED Secretary

Sarah Friday, Club Support Manager (item 11)
Ed Hunt, Facilities & Planning Manager (item 7)
Martin Rush, Head of Coaching and Athlete Development (item 7)

Other Representatives:

None.

- 1. Apologies**
Dan Isherwood

- 2. Declarations of Interest**
None

- 3. Draft minutes of April meeting**

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) EC agreed that these were an accurate reflection of the meeting.**
- 2.) Provide a copy to the EC Chair for signature. Action: SO**

4. **Actions / matters arising**

- Commonwealth Games [CJ]: CJ will share the date of the Club webinar re 2022 legacy once it's confirmed.
- Licensing Officer roles [England Council]: EC has feedback to Nichola Skedgel. Progress is being made. Close action.
- Officials liaison / CofSecs [EC]: the following people have been nominated for their regions. A best practice virtual meeting will be set up for the Autumn. Action: MG/SO. Good progress is being made – close action.
 - East: Matt Witt
 - East Mids: tbc
 - London: Mark Purser
 - North East: Mick Frazer
 - North West: tbc.
 - South East: Stuart Horsewood
 - South West: Keith Reed
 - West Mids: Margaret Afford
 - Y&H: Terry Bailey
- Traffic Management [ED]:.
Secretary postscript: A free online refresher course is available. Two LANTRA courses have been shortlisted for consideration. .

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) Confirm the Officials liaison / CofSecs person for the region. Action: JP (East Mids) and JC (North West)
Secretary postscript:
 - *East Mids: JP until someone else can be found.*
 - *North West: Shelby Williams.*

5. **EC Chair report**

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) None

6. **CEO report**

CJ reported that affiliation was looking positive, with 136k athletes currently registered. This was c40% ahead of this time last year and 13% below the 19/20 figure. CJ thanked Regional Councils for their support in licensing more than 1500 domestic competitions.

With regard to future income sources, the Sport England grant negotiations are ongoing.

It is hoped that an outcome from the DW Fitness outstanding payments will be announced in September.

EC suggested it would be helpful to see affiliation split into age and gender.

A pre-AGM webinar has been set for 6th October at 6pm. This will provide more opportunity for members to hear about last year and in particular the proposed Articles changes. The webinar will be promoted to the membership, along with all the relevant AGM documents, w/c 13th September.

EC queried whether talent ID could be made more regional to avoid excessive travelling as part of the ongoing review of the talent programme.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) Share affiliation data split by age and gender. DI
- 2.) Martin Rush to look at how we could ensure that talent support is made available more locally as part of the future talent system alongside hubs.
Action: MR

7. Facilities and venues / Coaching data

Ed Hunt and Martin Rush joined the meeting

Facilities and venues – Ed Hunt

EH showed a video on improvements that had been made to Mansfield ACs facility at Berry Hill, where EA worked in partnership with the club, local authority and other partner organisations to revitalise the track, upgrade the floodlighting and modernise the throws cage to meet new safety standards.

He informed EC that the Trackmark status had brought many positives, including significant investment in both track surfacing and throws cage improvements. The TrackMark reports have been utilised frequently over the past 18 months to help support Senior Officers of local authorities make a case to their members for investment into ageing athletics facilities.

EH thanked England Council for their support in the allocations of the Facilities Investment Fund which had proven very successful.

With regards to floodlighting EH confirmed that the commissioning of independent floodlighting checks (TrackMark Unit 5), were the only auditable way of ensuring the lighting levels met minimum safety standards and are therefore safe for everyone – this is particularly relevant for infield officials. EH is looking into EA staff carrying out provisional lighting checks ahead of independent surveys to help manage the transition over the next year or so.

Coaching data – Martin Rush

MR reported that EA continued to support coach development but a key barrier remains the significant time commitment required of coaches. He shared slides which included course feedback and coach qualification data. However, it was flagged that the data would certainly include qualified coaches who no longer coached. An annual survey of clubs and coaches was the only reliable way to provide correct data, albeit as a snapshot in time. MR also confirmed that there is a set process in place for clubs to check the system to ensure their coaches have up to date DBS certification. UKA is gathering more data as part of the UK wide strategy development.

EC discussed the challenges around coach qualifications and their comments included:

- Depending on EA capacity, a data cleanse would clarify the which coaches without valid DBS certification had in fact stopped coaching. Plus it would highlight the need for those that had not coached for a long time to renew their DBS and receive refresher training.
- ‘Soft’ incentives could be introduced for clubs, including recommending particular programmes that could be of benefit.
- Age trend data for courses/CPD/website training resources, would be useful (this is not recorded for webinars).
- Some clubs operated a model that paid a small remuneration to their coaches as they found that this improved retention. These costs were recuperated within the additional activity fees received.
 - JS highlighted that Scottish Athletics website had helpful guidance on their website with regard to the professional (ie. as if it was a business) set up of a club.
- Some clubs may have already professionalised their coaching structure and could share best practice?
- EC agreed this would be an ideal topic to discuss at the Whole Council Conference on afternoon of Saturday 23rd October (after EA AGM). As Mark Munro at UKA was working on a pilot scheme for professionalisation of coaching, MG offered to invite him. Agreement from EC.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) Share the video of the Mansfield club improvements with JP. Action: EH
- 2.) If capacity within team, carry out a coaching data cleanse, particularly around the DBS certification. Action: MR
- 3.) Consider introducing incentives / programmes for clubs and their coaches. Action: MR
- 4.) Provide age trend data on who is accessing the website, and other CPD where possible. Share this with EC. Action: MR
- 5.) Add coaching data / qualifications / professionalisation as a potential topic for the Whole Council Conference on 23rd October. Action: SO

Ed Hunt and Martin Rush left the meeting

8. Affiliation and registration fees 22-23

The options proposed were:

- 1.) Option 1: Retain the same fee levels for both athlete registration (£15) and club/ member body affiliation (£150)
- 2.) Option 2: Increase athlete registration to £16 and retain same club affiliation/ member body fee at £150
- 3.) Option 3: Retain athlete registration at £15, retain club affiliation at £150 and reduce the member body affiliation fee
- 4.) Option 4: Increase athlete registration to £16, retain club affiliation at £150 and reduce the member body affiliation fee

EC felt it would be useful to understand how clubs across the country operate and what athletes are being charged.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) **With regard to 22-23 affiliation fees, EC majority vote is in favour of Option 2 to go to EA Board to inform their decisions in September.**
- 2.) Understand the various operating models for clubs across the country including athletes' fees. Action: DI

9. Articles – potential 2021 changes

These potential changes were first considered and discussed briefly by England Council at the informal monthly call on 26th July, and their view was that the proposed amendments should be actioned this year. The topic was brought to EC again in this meeting to allow EC further opportunity for discussion and to raise any concerns.

The changes included aligning with the recent UKA changes.

CJ confirmed that a pre-AGM Board webinar had been set for 6th October to explain the proposed Articles changes to the membership in advance of the AGM on 23rd October.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) **EC agreed that as the proposed changes to the Articles should be actioned this year.**

10. Whole Council Conference

EC suggested some ideas for discussion at the conference.

- Competition framework for under 13s and below including YDL
- Officials - challenges with recruitment and retention
- Coaching – data/qualifications/professionalisation (as discussed in item 7)
 - Mark Munro to be invited.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) Add topics for discussion at Council Conference: Action: SO
- 2.) Keep EC up to date on the officials working group and share UKA strategy around officials (expected by mid October). Action: MG
 - a. ask clubs to feedback on their experience with recruiting and retaining officials, and it would be helpful if those that are successful in this area could share their strategies. Action: EC

11. Regional and National Awards

SF reminded EC of the timeline and provided an update on the nominations received so far. She will continue to share these updates weekly, and those categories which have received fewer nominations than expected will receive further targeted comms, and EC's support in encouraging nominations would be very welcome.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) None

12. England Council Diversity Champion

The paper was first circulated to EA in April and it was subsequently discussed at the EC monthly call on 24th May 2021.

Although all of EC should own diversity, the EC Diversity Champion would be the point of contact should councillors wish to raise any issues. The role would be a governance filter and work closely with the Board Diversity Champion (Anne Wafula-Strike) and Liz Purbrick (Inclusion Manager).

Conversations were taking place around a potential volunteer.

13. Sustainability Strategy Task & Finish Group – EC member

EC initially discussed this at the monthly call in July. JS, JK and SP all had current or recent experience in sustainability. but as JK and SP had less capacity, they were content for JS to volunteer for this role.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) **EC were content for JS to join the Sustainability Strategy Task and Finish Group as EC representative.**

14. England Council skills matrix

The skills matrix was shared as a useful tool to highlight the individual strengths within the EC should any councillors require any support within a particular area.

However, EC flagged that the matrix only highlighted the skills of the regional council chairs, and the full regional councils would bring additional skills that are not reflected in the matrix.

Resolved and Actions:

1.) None

15. AOB

Manchester International 18 August

Numbers were confirmed of those who were planning to attend the event, meet informally with their EC colleagues.

Tri-regional groups (officiating)

EC discussed whether these groups should operate in the same way as the national peer groups and be for a fixed term to provide a decent churn of new members. Differences were highlighted between the regions, but EC agreed it would benefit by having a clear succession plan.

London mini marathon

MD has received an enquiry requesting that a regional team is selected within a very tight timescale. EC confirmed that some regions did get involved in the mini marathon, while others did not.

CJ offered to speak to London Marathon to provide clarity for the regions.

Funetics Programme

An update was circulated in advance of the meeting for EC's information.

Meeting closed at 2:30pm

Next meeting: 20th October 2021

.....Chair