

**ENGLAND ATHLETICS ENGLAND COUNCIL MEETING
OUTCOMES
20th October 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) (items 1-8)
Matthew Dalton (East) (MD)
Adrian Day (London) (AD)
Moirá Gallagher (Yorks & Humberside) (MG)
Janice Kaufman (North East) (JK)
Richard Lewellyn-Eaton (South West) (RL)
Stuart Paul (West Midlands) (SP)
Jane Pidgeon (East Midlands) (JP)
Gary Shaughnessy, EA Board Chair

England Athletics Officers:

Emma Davenport, Head of Club Support and Participation (item 9)
Chris Jones (CJ), CEO
Sam O'Shea (SO), Board and NED Secretary
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 August 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

- CWG [CJ]: – an outcome of the webinar was to organise a separate session on coaching and officiating. EA staff, MD, SP, JK and Karl Ponty will be part of this group. EC agreed that clubs should share best practice in this area. Action closed.

- EC queried whether the under 13 competition structure could have CWG branding to provide impetus. CJ to speak to Nichola Skedgel regarding the potential for linking with CWG.
- EC Diversity Champion [AD]: Devonte Casely-Hayford has been successfully co-opted onto London Council and will take on the role as EC Diversity Champion. Action Closed
- Officials – Regional Council feedback [all EC]:
 - East Mids club forum minutes had been circulated to EC.
 - London council's club engagement program was progressing well and the feedback from those sessions has shown that the key issues are 1. Officials, 2. Coaches, 3. Facilities.
 - Feedback on courses:
 - there are very few courses on the EA website. Longer term dates would be helpful to enable future planning.
 - clarity is required on how to progress through the levels.
 - the paperwork can feel too complicated and application forms vary greatly between levels.
 - a separate section on the website would help.
 - at the recent East region's forum, it was apparent that mentoring wasn't taking place across the whole region. MD to share his forum notes.
 - at the Midlands tri-regional meeting, a main topic of discussion was the challenge of increasing the number of people progressing through the various levels.
 - CJ offered to pass on this feedback and there was opportunity to discuss this further at the Council Conference on 23rd, as Mark Munro would be in attendance.
- UKA officials strategy [MG]: 20/10 Mark Munro to attend the Council Conference on 23/10. Soft launch of strategy 31/10 and full launch in Nov. Action closed.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) Speak to Nichola Skedgel re the potential with linking the branding of under 13 competition to CWG. Action: CJ
- 2.) Pass on feedback from regional councils re officials and courses. Action: CJ

5. EC Chair report

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) None

6. CEO report

CJ thanked Council for their help in preparing for the regional awards.

- He reported the key results including 155k registered athletes (+17% on last year and 8/8% lower than 2019).
- Road Race licensing was growing and returning to normal.
- Nichola Skedgel and Martin Rush were carrying out some work on the UKA calendar fixture and in due course the Competition Working Group would be holding a webinar.
- EA has signed up to Sustainability in Sport which aims to benefit the environment and wider sport.
- EA is working with CGE to try and secure more places for the England team and await their response (currently we have 68 athletes and 36 para-athletes). The prep camp will be in Loughborough, we are waiting for confirmation of where our athletes will be based at the Games.
- The UKAM EGM took place in September, the future membership structure resolution wasn't approved.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) None

7. Talent pathway and hub update

- MR introduced the pathway which aims to support athletes and their personal coaches and aligns with both the EA and UKA strategic plans. It is hoped that the skills learned at the hubs are taken back to the respective clubs, which should benefit the talent pathway and retention. MR will pick up on individual cases where the skills and benefit are not being shared.
- The pilot hubs in Leeds and Birmingham have already had a great deal of success. A representative from each local club will be invited to sit on the management group of each hub.
- MR confirmed that two of the KPIs were to take 7 athletes to elite status and reduce injury.
- A list of who is involved (athlete, coach and club) is posted on the Youth Talent program web page. EC suggested that adding regional information would help with promotion.
- Concerns from clubs that athletes are being poached so sensitive and clear communications are needed to mitigate potential worries. As part of the transfer to a new coach, will be the necessity for the coach to sign a code of conduct.
EC felt that this topic should be debated further at the next meeting.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) For the next cycle, add region to the information on the Youth Talent programme web page. Action: MR
- 2.) Add Talent Hubs and clubs to next meeting's agenda. Action: SO

8. UKA rules and Northern Athletics (NA)

EC discussed the issue of NA not permitting athletes that were born in the north, but are no longer a member of a northern club, to compete in the north. NA are therefore not adhering to the UKA rule.

There is a supplementary rule which EC felt may need to be closed:

UKA Rule G2 (21) S4 UKA Supplement Competition Conditions 6:
“Additional Rules & Conditions: Any Competition Provider may apply additional rules and conditions to those required in UKA rules but must not relax any Rules. NOTE: A National Association may apply additional rules and conditions to competitions within their area of governance”.

EC agreed this practice was detrimental to the sport.

EC felt that if athletes continue to be blocked from competing, then EA should consider submitting a rule change request (the next cycle is in 2024). Although Level 2 licenses *could* be refused to levy the necessary change, this could be discriminatory to others and so would be a last resort.

MG suggested that the 3 northern Regional Council chairs should write to NA

Resolved and Actions:

1.) Write to Northern Athletics regarding competition for athletes born in the north but who are not members of a northern club. Action: MG, JC, JK

9. Clubs

EC was asked about sharing best practice with regard to coaching and disability and also what 3-4 things EA could do to support clubs.

EC agreed the key issues were, in order of priority, coaching, officials, facilities and volunteer recruitment.

The work taking place around safeguarding will enable positive change as this will help clubs identify what is needed.

Resolved and Actions:

1.) EC suggested the key issues are

- a. coaching,
- b. officials
- c. facilities
- d. volunteer recruitment

2.) A further session is required at the next meeting. Action: SO

10. Whole Council Conference prep

Resolved and Actions:

1.) None

11. Awards – Council nominees

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) **EC agreed that in the interest of transparency, from 2022, even if another region judges the nominees for a region, active councillors should not be put forward for an award.**

12. AOB

1. Future agenda topics

Members to consider topics that they would like to be considered during 2022. The forward agenda would then be brought back to the February meeting.

2 items were suggested:

- 1.) Road, Cross country, and social running groups. JK and RLW to lead.
- 2.) Officials – including endurance. JS to lead.

2. Devonte Casely-Hayford

Devonte has been co-opted to London Council and has been confirmed as Diversity Champion for England Council.

EC gave approval for Devonte to be co-opted onto England Council and be invited to all EC meeting. Action: SO

3. 2022 dates

Weds 23 Feb

Weds 20 April

Weds 17 Aug

Weds 9 Nov

Secretary postscript:

August meeting moved to Weds 24 Aug

4. Early impressions from EA Board Chair, Gary Shaughnessy

GS wished to thank EC for their welcome and summarised his early impressions during his 1st month as Chair of England Athletics.

- EA handled the pandemic very well financially although some difficult decisions had to be made.
- Many committed coaches, officials and volunteers
- Affiliation level are returning to normal, which is positive, but there is still huge potential from the 7m recreational runners.
- Digital is a key part of moving forward with regard to coaching support, particularly to help delegate more to local groups.
- There are many distractions that take us away from our ambition.
- We currently have a heavy dependency on SE funding.

- There is a significant long-term challenge on facilities, particularly Track & Field.
- We should make more of our influence on Government regarding health advantage.
- The sport appears to be a very complex environment. We should think a little simpler as it's an opportunity to shout louder about the positive impacts of our sport, to celebrate successes and to focus on the things where we can make a difference.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) Suggest agenda topics for 2022 to JS and SO. Action: all England Council.
- 2.) Add to February agenda: Action SO
 - a. Road, Cross country and social running groups. JK and RLW to lead.
 - b. Officials – including endurance. JS to lead.

Meeting closed at 1:35pm

Next meeting: 23rd February 2022

.....Chair