

Minutes of the meeting of the General Council (GC)

Held on Thursday 6th Jan 2022

Microsoft Teams Meeting

<i>Present:</i>	Joyce Tomala	(JT)	Regional Representative – East Wales.
	Lynette Harries	(LH)	President – Welsh Athletics.
	Chris Moss	(CM)	Acting Director of Development – British Athletics.
	Hannah Pretty	(HP)	Acting Head of Development and Participation – Welsh Athletics
	Rob Sage	(RS)	Head of Corporate Services – Welsh Athletics
	Sue Alvey	(SA)	Chair of General Council
	Rhiannon L-P	(RLP)	Head of Competition – Welsh Athletics
	Adrian Palmer	(AP)	Performance Programme Manager – Welsh Athletics
	Arwel Lewis	(AL)	Mountain and Trail Committee
	Gerald Davies	(GD)	Welsh Schools Representative.
	James Williams	(JW)	Chief Executive Officer – Welsh Athletics
	Steve Paskell	(SP)	Regional Representative – South Wales
	Dic Evans	(DE)	Regional Representative – West Wales
	Sharon Leech	(SL)	Road and Cross-Country Committee
	John Hatton	(JH)	Regional Representative – North Wales
	James Williams	(JW)	Chief Executive Officer – Welsh Athletics

Papers circulated in advance:

None

1. Apologies for Absence **6:30pm**

Sue Hooper, Jamie Clode, Dai Williams

2. Declarations of Interest **6:32pm**

None declared.

3. UKA and COVID update – James Williams

UK Athletics Members [formerly UKMC]

The last 12 months has seen the UKAM continue to implement the recommendations of the Dame Sue Street Report and resolve its own membership and representation issues with limited success. As a result, no other business has been covered by the group, no reports received and hence none issued back out for circulation. Wales continues to be represented on the group by Steve Perks, Chair of the Board of Welsh Athletics, but ongoing challenges remain in relation to the representation of the Celtic nations on UKMA. JW and SP will continue to engage and report back any progress as and when it is made.

Return to Athletics Guidance and COVID Update:

With the Welsh Government move, to effectively Level 2 restrictions, the Welsh Athletics Return to Athletics (Safe Return of Sport) guidance documents were updated and published on 26th December 2021. From a club's perspective, this was reflected in the updates to the 'Club Activity', the 'Group

Meeting of the Welsh Athletics General Council; Thursday 6th January 2022

Running' and the 'Providing Facility Use' documentation. On 4th January 'Covid Guidance for Groups & Clubs in Wales' which provides the key restrictions in a one-page document. These can all be found on the [Return to Athletics](#) page on the Welsh Athletics website.

Whilst, for the most part this will not effect club activities significantly, there are some associated / additional restrictions and some key things to note;

- The move to Level 2 does mean that there are restrictions were imposed on organised gatherings (a maximum of 30 indoors and 50 outdoors) however, as previously exercised during 2021 and throughout various stages of the pandemic, multiple groups are permitted within a training facility (due to the size and space available).
- From a competitions perspective, waves of 50 are permitted, but Event Organisers must make every effort to ensure that each wave does not overlap at any point.
- **Juniors are exempt from the restrictions, and therefore there is no maximum limit on junior participants in any activity, with parents/guardians permitted also. Therefore, this does mean that all junior activity can continue as previous.**

Staff Changes at Welsh Athletics

New starters:

- Neil Taylor Para-athletics Pathway Coordinator [from 1st December 2021]
- Carl Williams Safeguarding and Compliance Officer [from 17th Jan 2022]
- Rhys Williams National Talent Development Coordinator- Sprints & Hurdles [from 4th Jan]
- Jozie Postles Communications Manager [from 10th Jan]
- Alex Donald Endurance Competitions Manager [from 17th Jan]

Sam Gordon (Digital and Communications Officer) has left the organisation

Hannah Pretty has stepped in to cover the role of Head of Development whilst Chris Moss is seconded to British Athletics in the role of Director of Development. We will look to appoint cover for Hannah's role in the South region

Hannah Phillips is going on maternity leave and we are advertising for cover for her role

Welsh Athletics Strategy update

Welsh Athletics will be consulting over the coming months on our strategic plan with a view to refreshing the aims and objectives where necessary. Details of webinar sessions will be circulated in due course.

4. Clubs Update [CM & HP]

Club Membership: As of 1st January 2022, club membership stands at 11,268. Of the membership 49% are male, 51% are female, 70% are senior and 30% are juniors. Tracking at 87.2% of pre COVID membership (up from 78.7% as reported at the last meeting) so there is a positive trend there.

As has been mentioned previously, we have upgraded the **Secretaries Portal** which has now been released to us. We will be working with a number of clubs in the coming weeks, and this will go live for all clubs from April 2022.

Club Governance/Safeguarding: All clubs need to have an awareness of the Quinlan Review recommendations and be implementing these as appropriate. Each club must have both a male

Meeting of the Welsh Athletics General Council; Thursday 6th January 2022

Welfare Officer and Female Welfare Officer appointed that is appropriately trained and has a UKA DBS in place. Clubs must also have agreed to implement the UKA Club Safeguarding Codes of Conduct and will ensure that all members agree to the relevant code as well as confirmed that they have full awareness that they are required to review all Safeguarding Policies and related documents on a 3 yearly cycle. We will continue to monitor and audit Club Welfare Officers and their DBS and training status.

Facilities: as mentioned at the last meeting, we are currently working with a company called. We are in the process of finalizing the initial draft of the Welsh Athletics Facilities Strategy. Off the back of requests from the Track & Field Committee (as well as other groups) we are in the process of establishing a number of facility 'Health Checks' with key competition facilities in Wales these will take place in the coming weeks.

Funding: Regional Athletics Council Grants (2021/22): These open for application and each of the RAC's has been written to explain the new process (aligned to the strategy). The Development Team are obviously available to help and assist with these applications as and if necessary.

Funding: Be Active Wales Fund: A note on another source of funding available for clubs and has been accessed with good levels of success especially in the early part of 2022. We continue to work with clubs and groups on applying for this fund. Further information can be found here: [Be Active Wales Fund - Funding for community sport clubs and organisations | Sport Wales | Sport Wales](#)

Funding: Club Modernisation and Development Fund: Continuing on previous years' success of this grant we are looking forward to awarding clubs up to £2000 for projects that will help to modernize and develop their activities and processes. A number of applications are expected to come in over the next few days from across Wales. The deadline for applications is Monday 10th January, with the panel meeting on 18th January to award the grants.

Save the Date: The conference and awards weekend will be happening on Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th March 2022 at the Vale Resort, Hensol. The Welsh Athletics & Run Wales Conference and Awards dinner will take place on Saturday 5th, with the official's conference taking place on Sunday 6th. Following on the previous years, we hope to bring engaging and inspiring content to support the growth and development of our sport across the weekend.

Welsh Athletics & Run Wales National Awards: Nominations are now open for the national awards, with a closing date of 27th January. Nominations are being taken through Microsoft forms and we have close to 100 nominations in so far. The nomination link can be found [here](#). This year we have taken a step to ensure the number of award categories stays relevant and engaging and have thus streamlined the awards to 17 categories (including the Athlete's Athlete award). Full list of award categories can be found [here](#). The awards panel will meet on Thursday 3rd February.

Coach Education:

Despite the restrictions, Coach Education and Qualifications can continue and the coach education and qualifications calendar has been updated to reflect all forthcoming course. Further information and dates can be found here: <https://www.welshathletics.org/en/events/coaching-courses>

5. Progression Planning for GC (RS) 7.00pm

Meeting of the Welsh Athletics General Council; Thursday 6th January 2022

No expression of interest for this role have been received to date, SA & RS to move forward with more proactive approach and contact potential candidates. SA keen for this to progress asap to ensure sufficient time for candidate to attend Board meeting alongside her.

6. Competition & Officials Update (RLP) 6.50pm

Welsh Athletics via JW & RLP are in constant discussion with Sport Wales and Welsh Government to press for amendments to the restrictions to facilitate mass participation events. Appreciation that use of 'waves' within the current wording is impractical – further discussion to be had at the Competition Providers ASK US session on 7th January.

Indoors

- Junior Open and Regional Championships include within it, has been postponed from 9th Jan to 20th Feb
- Status of Junior and Senior indoor Championships is still unknown and dependant on Welsh Government announcements and subsequent discussions with Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Outdoors T&F

- Senior Championships – weekend of 11th & 12th June
- Junior Championships – weekend of 13th & 14th August

Road Championships

Events are: 5k – Whitchurch Race for Victory, 10k – Caerphilly 10k, Half Marathon – March edition of Cardiff Half Marathon, Marathon – Virgin London Marathon.

SL queried availability of place in the CHM for members wishing to enter – RLP/RS to speak with R4W and confirm release of spaces for members wishing to enter the Championship.

Cross Country

Schools Cross Country Championships may need to be moved/amended to allow time for districts to hold qualifying events. No restrictions on Junior XC taking place, but understood that school environments are challenging at present and inter-school competition may not be supported by schools or Local Authorities/

Officials Update

Webinar session on the strategy released jointly by UKA & the HCAFs to take place on 12th January – [more info here](#) . **Save the Date** – Officials' conference – Sunday 6th March @ the Vale Hotel; topics currently being discussed in Officials committees

7. Future topics for discussion

SA acknowledged that COVID had dominated discussion at General Council for the past 18 months and was keen to return to presentations and discussion on other topics in 2022. Suggested topics included:

- Meeting and hearing from Carl Williams, new Safeguarding and Compliance officer
- Meeting and hearing from Neil Taylor, new Para-athletics Pathway Manager
- Discussing and feeding into the review of the Strategic plan for Athletics in Wales
- Update on the Regional Development Programme
- Discussion on how best to support schools

8. Date of next Meetings:, Tuesday 1st March, Thursday 5th May, July Joint with board (TBC), Tuesday 6th September