

Minutes of the meeting of the General Council (GC)

Held on Thursday 4th March 2021

Microsoft Teams Meeting

<i>Present:</i>	Joyce Tomala	(JT)	Regional Representative – East Wales.
	Lynette Harries	(LH)	President – Welsh Athletics.
	Jamie Clode	(JC)	Secretary of General Council.
	Chris Moss	(CM)	Head of Development and Participation – Welsh Athletics.
	Rob Sage	(RB)	Head of Corporate Services – Welsh Athletics
	Sue Alvey	(SA)	Chair of General Council
	Dai Williams	(DW)	Regional Representative – South Wales
	Rhiannon L-P	(RLP)	Head of Competition – Welsh Athletics
	Kay Hatton	(KH)	Regional Representative – North Wales
	John Hatton	(JH)	Regional Representative – North Wales
	Dic Evans	(DE)	Regional Representative – West Wales
	Arwel Lewis	(AL)	Mountain and Trail Committee
	Gerald Davies	(GD)	Welsh Schools Representative.
	Lucy Archer	(LA)	Regional Representative – South Wales
	Lynne Brier	(LB)	Secretary of Track and Field Committee.
	Robert Campion	(RC)	Regional Representative – West Wales
	Sue Hooper	(SH)	Representing Officials Committee
	Ruth Powell	(RP)	Regional Representative –East Wales

Papers circulated in advance:

None

1. Apologies for Absence 6:30pm

Sharon Leech - Road and Cross-Country Committee, Graham Webb – Vice Chair of General Council

2. Declarations of Interest 6:35pm

None declared.

3. Safeguarding Review (SJ) 6.35pm

Thanks to General Council for the opportunity to attend. Track & Field committee representatives will find this very familiar albeit with a few updates.

Steve will not read through slides but will summarise as go through and people can ask questions based on content. At Welsh Athletics interviewed were James Williams, Steve Jones and Chris Moss. Reports submitted to Welsh Athletics late July 2020 and an action plan was formulated based on report. Majority of recommendations were targeted at UKA but some WA specific ones. Angus Macdonald was appointed into role and is in post at present, with post to be advertised. SJ is a member of the case management fortnightly group. Concentrated on minimising administrative impact to clubs, trying to collate data during the affiliation process to support this. WA were identified as having good practice with 2 officers at each club and shared with other home nations. Audit likely to take place in next affiliation year.

LB - Mandatory training for athletes/members/officers etc. Officers and coaches complete this at renewal. Is this expected for athletes too. £10 fee etc. £10 could also be a barrier for athletes and don't want to be seen as a money spinner.

SJ - Yet to determine what exact expectations will be for athletes. Initially everyone should have some F2F training, but this in work in progress. We will work with UKA to get some clarity on what will be offered. Will discuss fee at next meeting, next week.

Rewriting all the documents, policies and procedures has taken time, so has slowed uploading and finalising versions to portal and website.

DW - anything extra for regional welfare officers or can they get involved?

SJ - 3 Welfare officers in post. Regional officers to meet with SJ in near future and confirm how role will look going forward.

SA - Thanks Steve for all your work on this, updating all the documents is a never-ending cycle of work and the challenge of working with UKA has added to the task.

SJ - Emphasis that Chris Quinlen put on report was more collaboration on home counties and should work together more with UKA taking the lead on all things safeguarding.

RP - We have been going through all officers' records and ensuring all have a DBS. Is there a way to apply for this and safeguarding before attending any course?

SJ - Yes, this can be done and there is no charge for a volunteer DBS.

SJ, CM is there anything I have missed. No, important that this message is distributed and shared with clubs and all. There will be webinars and contact with all clubs to support and help implement the measures over the following weeks and into the new affiliation year.

SJ - Appreciate that this will add to club workload, however this will help to ensure the safety of our sport and everyone can work together.

4. Return to training update (CM) 6.50pm

Return to Training / Group Running / Facility Use:

Meeting of the Welsh Athletics General Council; Tuesday 12th January 2021, Dydd Mawrth 12th Ionawr 2021

Obviously at this moment in time there is relatively little to update on and we continue to await updates from WSA and Welsh Government. As we have been throughout the pandemic we continue to work closely with the Welsh Sports Association, Sport Wales and Welsh Government to lobby the support for an accelerated return to sport. We are ever hopeful and as soon as there are any changes we will update guidance and communicate as appropriate. It is worth remembering that it is likely to be a phased return to activity and facility access therefore clubs should prepare accordingly and ensure that they have in place their; Risk Assessments, trained COVID Officer, registration processes for track & trace purposes, etc.

Ask Us Session – Wednesday 10th March (7.30-8.30pm)

The next national 'Ask Us' session will take place on the evening of Wednesday 10th March. The aim will be to provide a wider sporting update including the latest Return to Athletics guidance and plans in place to facilitate a wider return to activity across the sport. As usual, there will be the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback. Registration for this event can be found here:

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7371705808491649804>

Safeguarding Review and Recommendations:

We are working through the recommendations and implementing changes and updates as appropriate in line with those recommendations. Just a reminder to all clubs that the new affiliation year is approaching (1st April) and there will be an increased focus on providing the safest environments for people of all ages to enjoy the sport. As usual, as part of affiliation, clubs will need to have appointed 2 Club Welfare Officers (one male, one female) that have completed a UKA DBS check and have undergone safeguarding training. Over the coming months, if not already in place, clubs will need to update and adopt their Children's Safeguarding and Adults at Risk policies which will need to be accessible via the club's website. A wider communication will be sent directly to all clubs (Chairs and Club Welfare Officers), the Regional Safeguarding Leads and we will be hosting a series of webinars to both relay information as well as answer any questions related to the new processes and measures that will be implemented.

Facilities:

Earlier in the year we wrote to all facilities in an attempt to get a picture of what help / assistance facilities would require in order to (i) return to training (essentially club access) and (ii) readiness to return to competition. Replies are being collated as they come in.

As previously reported, progress continues to be made with facility development projects in; Caerphilly, Carmarthen, Newport, Cardiff International Sports Campus (Throws), Cardiff Met (Throws).

Virtual Conference Series:

The '#Unite' Virtual Conference Series starts this coming weekend with the Run Wales Festival on Friday 5th and Saturday 6th March followed by the Officials Conference on Sunday 7th March. Sign up and response has been very positive across the board. A reminder that the conferences will take place on the following dates;

- Friday 5th and Saturday 6th March: Run Wales Festival
- Sunday 7th March: Officials and Volunteers Conference
- Saturday 13th March: Clubs Conference
- Saturday 27th March: Youth Development Conference (Coaching)

Meeting of the Welsh Athletics General Council; Tuesday 12th January 2021, Dydd Mawrth 12th Ionawr 2021

- Sunday 28th March: Run Leaders Conference
- Friday 9th April: Teachers Conference

Registration for all events can be completed via EventBrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/welsh-athletics-32395998621>

Welsh Athletics Engagement Series:

We launched a full series of virtual engagement activities as well as a full series of Club Development / Support webinars. As part of this, the 'In Conversation With' series has been highlighting the Welsh Athletics National Award recipients.

Weds 10th March	Mental Health Awareness for Sports Clubs
Weds 10th March	In Conversation With: Ogmore Phoenix / Run4All Neath
Weds 10th March	National Ask Us Session
Weds 17th March	Queens Honours – How to Master an Honours Nomination
Weds 17th March	Adults at Risk Training
Weds 17th March	In Conversation With: James Thie
Mon 22nd March	Benefits of becoming a cashless club
Tues 23rd March	Adults at Risk Training
Mon 29th March	Mental Health Awareness for Sports Clubs
Weds 31st March	In Conversation With: Cardiff AAC
Weds 7th April	In Conversation With: Steve Hames
Mon 12th April	Finances at your club
Mon 26th April	Setting your club strategy (Live)
Mon 10th May	Using technology to support your membership
Mon 24th May	Reviewing & maximising your club coaching infrastructure

All activities are detailed on the Welsh Athletics 'Events' page:
<https://www.welshathletics.org/en/events?page=1>

National Running Campaign:

The National Running Campaign #FromMyDoor has been a huge success to date and has seen a great level of exposure for the sport and a great level of engagement. The campaign will continue whilst the nation is under lockdown restrictions and we will, of course, be encouraging people to get out and get active to support both their physical and mental well-being.

Honours: Open Club Webinar: Queens Honours – How to Master an Honours Nomination:

Meeting of the Welsh Athletics General Council; Tuesday 12th January 2021, Dydd Mawrth 12th Ionawr 2021

This session will take place on Wednesday 17th March (1.00-2.00pm). Full details and registration information can be found here: <https://www.welshathletics.org/en/event/queens-honours-how-to-master-an-honours-nomination>

Funding: Club Modernisation / Grassroots Grant Scheme:

Closing date for applications was 26th February 2021 and the panel will meet on the evening of Thursday 11th March with successful applicants being informed a couple of days after. In addition, as a sport we have had very positive uptake from clubs applying to the Sport Wales Be Active Wales Fund.

Cashless Clubs / Payments via Bank Transfer:

Just a reminder that Welsh Athletics intends to become a cashless (and cheque-less) organisation - we will not be accepting cheques in the Welsh Athletics office from 1st April 2021. We first completed the webinar on this subject back in August 2020 which highlighted the benefits of going cashless, this will be repeated on 22nd March as part of the ongoing Club Development Webinar Series.

Coach Qualifications:

Continue with online versions of the courses being delivered where appropriate. Work continues with British Athletics in making more of the qualification framework accessible via e-learning, virtual learning and blended approaches to the delivery.

KH - Return to training, at present its 2 or 4 people. Are you pushing for the next stage to be 30 so clubs can get back to training?

CM - Indications seem to be that 30 adults outdoors. Is some suggestion that it will be in place for U18, which would be a great boost. But we all would be happy with 30 to get some training.

AL - England athletics, 29th of March there will be full on fell running within covid rules. Nothing to stop athletes going over the border.

CM - Probably best answered by RLP. Challenging with devolved restrictions

RLP - Quite a difference between restrictions between Eng and Wales. It has been raised that England have sharing this roadmap. Detail has not been fully shared, but they expect restrictions in place. It has been raised that people will travel to compete if this situation occurs. From a governing body perspective, members need to be reminded that members should not look to bring the sport into disrepute.

5. Competition Update (RLP)

7.00pm

We are lucky to have some approval for elite events to take place. 3 weeks ago, throws comp @ Newport. First elite only event across all sports. Another this weekend 10k walking & Running. Welsh Athletics are leading the way with elite. A program has been submitted to Welsh Government, to allow athletes to prepare for Olympics and junior international.

In terms of a timeline for a return to athletics, hopeful at each review to see what may come. It is expected to return with a limit of 30 and this will be incorporated into the roadmap. Talks with clubs who are involved in Junior leagues are being spoken to, to allow for a format to continue this year. Will still need to be creative and utilise hyper localised events. Forum at UKA level next Wednesday to discuss how the fixture calendar can be coordinated to create as many opportunities for as many tiers as possible. Official's conference has had a great uptake with over 80 signed up. Possibility that WG may restart the pilot events scheme early summer but are looking at considerations for process for restart.

Cross country equalisation survey, results were analysed by England Athletics and a meeting was held to discuss, 5% were from Welsh parties. No clear conclusion on how best to conclude this process. May need a wider strategy for cross country to develop as a sport.

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Results will be communicated later and a webinar held.

KH - Quick question, issuing of licencing of events. Appreciate you cannot say when events can restart, however there is a lot of planning. At last lockdown Run Britain were issuing but WA were not. When do you think WA will issue?

RLP - if it fits within guidelines, it would be allowed to go ahead, however WG has no roadmap, so a date is not clear. Run Britain, would still go to Jacqueline, she would hold off issuing until knew restrictions permitted the events. She has been communicating with organisers and being flexible in amendments made to licence. Get application in and Jacqueline can work with you to manage within the guidelines.

JH - We have two events with dates planned all organisation is in place.

RLP - get application into Jacqueline and she can look to support you.

Dic Evans - Involved in Trail - Annually have trail international in Brittany in June, at the moment this year's event is not postponed. What are the chances in Wales in encouraging a team to go from Wales? They are looking to update in April on meeting go ahead.

RLP - Based to speak to Adrian, he deals with international and will also depend on travel arrangements including quarantine arrangements. Will not discourage competing if within guidelines.

JT - All YDL clubs have been notified of cancellation of events 24th April & 15th may, lower age. Upper age at beginning of May cancelled also. Will update on remaining events later. It's difficult to coordinate with cross border teams. The number of clashes and are a nightmare. It would be good if RLP can raise this at fixture meeting. It's not fair to all involved.

RLP - Will feedback.

RP - With regards to juniors, really keen to be involved. Who are you liaising with for juniors?

RLP - Have a little working group to put together what can be delivered within the 30 limits for clubs in house. When numbers grow, look to have a hub competition with central results organised by Darran. Trying to give clubs a template with flexibility they can apply.

RP - Really keen to get juniors back active and happy to provide additional support to RLP working group.

RLP - be great to have another involved. Key to get people back, working towards fitness and get people ready to compete.

6. IR Track and Field Championship Handbook (JT) 7.10pm

Had intended this meeting to be sign off handbook, there has been feedback from all regions and have been extremely positive. Were feedback has been pertinent to the competition and progressive, this has been included. Has been a lot of work.

Track & Field review will be on 7th April, bring to General Council at the May meeting and then the board, then publish.

RLP - Thanks to JT, has been a mammoth task and the document is very comprehensive. In terms of 2021, looking to get something to go ahead on that date. Not determined what the event will be but want something to go ahead.

LH - Want to reiterate what RLP, pleased to note that all regions were positive and committed to the way forward.

Everyone appreciated the value of this competition and we all need to look forward. Amount of work JT has put in has been magnificent into all the versions created.

SA - minute thanks to JT for all hard work and look forward to it coming to General Council

7. East Wales Region Report 7.25pm

We have asked clubs to feedback how they have been coping and share good practice. Had several clubs to present and want to keep this going forward with a minimum of 2 clubs taking part each meeting.

Asked to raise by endurance section when asked for feedback on virtual relays.

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Complaints generally that clubs were not getting replies to emails. Had asked about safeguarding, risk assessments.

JT it had been advised that maybe staff were on furlough.

Several of the clubs were unhappy at the tone of the emails. Poor organisation. Number of disqualifications were unfair given the rules were unclear.

The message being fed from clubs is that WA don't consider grass roots.

RLP - with regards to virtual relays, communication has been identical to other home counties. Scrutiny has been heightened due to qualification being achieved. If there any examples that can be shared, will review emails on tone.

JT - will forward examples to CM and RLP.

CM - Contact details are for rosper, we can feed that back to UKA.

SA - great to see more good work from the East region in contacting clubs and sharing feedback

8. AOB – UKA Membership Consultation 7.35pm

James will be writing to all clubs advising on the membership.

Consultation story <https://www.welshathletics.org/en/blog/post/consultation-on-the-membership-of-uk-athletics> Any feedback on this to James Williams. Will also be an ask us on March 25th. Consultation will end on 16th April.

9. Date of next Meeting 7.45pm

4th May 2021 at 6:30pm