

## **Welsh Athletics Track and Field Officials Committees**

**Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2021. (Teams Conference Call)**

### **Present**

Rhiannon Linington-Payne (RLP), Sue Hooper (SH), Joyce Tomala (JT), Lynette Harries (LH), Alan Currie (AC), Phil James (PJ), Zoe Holloway (ZH), Geoff Wickens (GW), Sue Maughan (SM), Jeff Mapps (JM)

### **1. Apologies**

SH “running” late from work and will join asap

### **2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

No Conflict of Interest

### **3. Welsh Athletic Updates**

#### **a Competition update:**

RLP gave an over view of the Outdoor season and stated that the feedback had been very positive, thanking all for the help and support and if this could be passed onto all concerned. Agreed it was challenging at times with the number of officials that came forward and plans to address this by RLP & ZH will be addressed over the next 12/18 Months.

Regarding the Indoor availability an email was circulated at the end of last week and responses are coming through.

Planning to discuss the main Management/Chef roles at our next meeting, but will sort out the combined events independently.

Dates for Indoors:

7<sup>th</sup> Nov WA/WSAA Combined Events

5<sup>th</sup> Dec/9<sup>th</sup> Jan Junior Open Events

29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> Jan Senior/U15 Champs

5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Feb U20/17/13 Champs

There are a few other dates that are being organised by “other” providers, Cardiff Met, Throws events Ryan Spencer-Jones.

The same format as the outdoors for the Senior/U15 champs as this worked very well and the feedback was very positive.

RLP asked for any questions on the indoor dates. No questions...

JT asked how the fixture list was progressing for the Outdoors 2022. RLP stated that it was going well and they are just looking at junior events with it being ready mid to end of October. JT raised concern over the date for the Regional Champs and it being in June with a Bank Holiday due to the jubilee.

### c Education update:

**Pathway Survey:** This went out in June 2021 with over 30 responses, most from the North & West Regions.

North -4 x Field/1 x Track/1 x TK/1 x RW.

West- 6 x Field/2 x Track/1 x TK/ 1 x Start.

South-1 x Field.

East-1 x Track.

Various different outcomes from this with comments regarding Mentors/CMA/Up Grading and Progression.

ZH will send out to each result's to each discipline. ZH stated that on the availability list we have added the question about needing a report or if some shadowing is required.

So far 9 responses for reports.

So far 3 Yes/8 Maybe for Management shadowing.

JT raised the point that there was only one response from the East and that she had replied to the survey, ZH confirmed that it was only those that said yes to progression that had been included in the data.

SM stated that it was great that officials are wanting to progress, but we will have to manage some reports very carefully. Also that we need to prioritise the Welsh Officials as the Secondary officials should be able to get through their Primary regions.

GW agreed with SM on the careful management of reports.

**Tutor Training:** ZH gave the dates of the TT on the 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> November, Phil James/Rory McKerlick are a Yes, SH to respond about it, ZH & GW have spoken about the possibility of a TK tutor from the North.

**Officials Course:** ZH stated that we have had a number of courses over the summer with a few issues with them being online. 2 TK course were held face to face with GW and these went very well. SM held an online FJ course last night and 50% did not attend, this has been an ongoing issue over the summer with people booking on and then not attending. ZH pointed out that this does not seem to be an issue in England/Scotland and the courses they hold are not free like ours are. ZH spoke of maybe charging for the courses and then giving a refund once the course is completed or after 6/12 months when L1 is reached.

RLH stated that the move to "free" Officials education was made many years ago as WA did not want a financial burden for volunteers but with them being free does that mean there is a lack of incentive for the volunteer to complete the course. RLP stated that we are in a catch 22 situation.

JT stated that England Athletics have a scheme on going with the YDL and other English leagues where officials from clubs within the leagues (England only) can obtain a voucher (which club officials have to apply for) to cover the cost of course fees and a £20.00 voucher off the cost of kit, when they have completed the level 2 course. JT stated that a meeting was taking place in the coming weeks and the scheme may not have been the success that was anticipated, to date approximately 40 officials have applied for course vouchers. The Vice Chair of YDL is coordinating the scheme and aims to promote more. JT had pointed out that the scheme would not benefit the Welsh clubs as courses and kit is free JT is not sure what the position is with Scottish Athletics or Athletics N. Ireland.

ZH stated that she was aware of this scheme with the YDL and asked for others opinions. ZH stated that people sign up for the course but fail to attend for various reasons; ZH said she is following up afterwards but it is becoming very tricky as courses are then not full.

LH suggested we take a wider view and perhaps change some of our rules, taking the YDL as example LH found that she has not had an issue with clubs presenting the required number of officials and when we come to some of our events we write in that X number of officials are required and perhaps liaise with Chris Moss to look at how we can encourage clubs to recruit more officials as this is a vital club development.

GW indicated that online course are not doing us any favours and he is aware of the circumstance we are in and they are a good substitute at the moment but they are all courses based on a practical experience and it is important that this is maintained as there are certain aspects that are hands on.

PJ concurred with what has been said and again with Photo Finish it is a hand's on course, PJ sat in on a Photo Finish course and felt that it lost a lot as you were unable to have hands on with set up of equipment.

JT raised a point that it has been reported to her that in England that some of the modules are accessible after the courses and was querying the quality of some of the Field cards this year. Feedback from England was that because it is modular and when the initial part has been completed the course attendee can then decide if they want to visit the part that covers filling in field cards, and wondered if this was the same as our courses.

SM came in and said she was a bit confuse by the module nature as the course is 4 hours long and it covers the various field card also that she understands that on line course are not as personal or hands on. SM has taken a hands on with new officials and course attendees who have been at meeting with her and taken a hands on with them, walking around the event site and showing the set ups with other experienced officials, the aftercare we all need to apply with new officials. SM pointed out the benefits of on line is that attendees can be from all regions thus taking out travel time/costs, pros & cons from both sides. SM stated that it is a standard course through the UK. JT will report back that we in Wales are covering all aspects of courses.

ZH stated that the Endurance course is defiantly modular with a 2 hour course followed by the 2 hour RA the modules that you have to do after the course. ZH commentated that course attendees could have attended a course and due to circumstance have not been to a meeting to put this into practice thus having a long gap between a course and practical experience.

LH wanted to go back to what has been used in the past by looking into the course within a club structure and to liaise with coaches, LH stated that she was referring to Field events, allowing course attendees to have a practical experience and for clubs to get together and hold courses over a few club nights.

JT asked if all were happy for this to be added to the next agenda and pursuing some local based club events and look at the pros/cons.

ZH Education commented on the change from 14 to 16 age bracket that was going through TAG and she is waiting for confirmation from Paula and will update. Endurance is already 16 it is just T&F that is 14.

ZH & PJ attended a PF & Tec course meeting with other UKA personal, this is being actioned via a working group.

**b Officials update:**

SH informed the committee that sadly Donald Melrose had lost his battle with throat cancer. Sue will send a card to the family and pass on the address to Lynette, as president Lynette will write to the family.

SH informed the committee of the Peer Group nominations and appointments.

Nominations from us were:

Start Team-Mark Purser -appointed

Time Keeper-John Barwick-appointed

Photo Finish-Alison Jordan-appointed

Field Judge-John Townend-not appointed – Paul Smith-appointed

Track Judge-Jill Freeman-not appointed-Steve Snodden-appointed

SH informed the committee that she and ZH had a catch up on active officials from the list that SH receives monthly from UKA. We have a total of 396 Active officials listed this includes all disciplines (T&F/End) a break down is:

Track & Field 227

Endurance 59

Other 110 (this is all who have attended a course but for whatever reason not submitted a L1 application)

SH added that we have 62 Secondary officials to Wales.

SH & ZH to touch base with the 110 “other” officials to see if they are still active in the sport.

JT asked if there is a breakdown of Regions for the officials.

SH indicated that some officials mix up the Regions and what they have listed is not true to where they live.

SH to action a break down.

SH stated that the reminder for ROE’s to be sent in was sent to officials as a reminder.

SH commented on the positive feedback from officials throughout the summer events and how glad they were to have meetings back and how well organised the meetings were. One of the “niggles” were about the expenses around the online form and the delay.

RLP came in on the expenses. Jessica has spent some time on the new format for official’s expenses to reduce the paper trail and the preference from the finance team is to go paperless. The online form was rolled out this summer and there is a payment run every 2 weeks and will move to once a month due to how much time is spent on expenses.

SH suggested that we put info on the officials information that expenses need to be in by a certain date to receive otherwise it will miss the cut of date and not received until the following months run.

ZH pointed out that she had spoken to Jessica around the expenses and a different style of form is being looked at and she will keep SH updated.

#### **4 Discussions:**

##### **a Officials resources:**

SM raised that conversations had gone on over the summer regarding officials in Chief and management roles for the 1<sup>st</sup> time and having examples of duty sheets that are accessible as this is something that is picked up by doing the role. SH tasked other L4 FJ’s to send in their “top tips”. Chris Price is developing an online excel spread sheet to help and support in the development of duty sheets. SM will pull together with ZH getting onto the Officials page on the WA website. The TM handbook is looking at being updated and ZH

along with Chris Price are looking at this. It was suggested that the other disciplines may want to think about this as well.

#### **b Officials Conference:**

SM asked for a discussion around ideas for conference topics at our next meeting and feed into ZH, possibly linking in the resources for training sessions at future officials conferences.

ZH gave the date for the Officials conference. 6<sup>th</sup> March 2022. Face to face as well as Zoom as an option and part of the awards and clubs conference weekend. ZH as for any ideas. Venue is TBC at the moment. SM pointed it was the same date as Vault Cardiff but RLP quickly came in to say that Ed Thompson had called today to rearranged for the following weekend.

JT raised concerns about the WA website and how difficult it is to find information with better links for officials with dedicated easy to find and navigate pages. ZH will contact Rob Sage on the website issue.

LH also commented that the website is not up to date with information around the CEO & Coach roles out dated. JT agreed with LH that several pages and links were out of date.

#### **c Inter Regional T & F Comp**

JT did a brief run down on the 2021 pilot competition that was held in Carmarthen. Andrew Jenkins was praised for the amount of work he put into the day and prior to the event. The North Region pulled out a few weeks prior to the event with the South pulling out on the Monday prior to the weekend's event. JT spoke of her annoyance to the Region Reps and it was then decided that athletes would be approached and teams were at the events from the South.

A decision was made to have a full discussion at the next GC and have asked Regions to go back to ask if they are going to still support any Regional competitions. The main point for this committee is that the Regions must supply officials; JT acknowledged that is it very difficult to get officials and the Inter Regional event was earmarked as a development event for officials.

SM was not sure on why this was being discussed at this meeting but appreciated the link to officials but it is part of a wider discussion as to it going ahead in the future and then look at how we manage officials and support.

LH spoke about the communication around the meeting or lack of. But on a positive note there were a number of new officials and all did good job.

SH spoke about her communication with Andrew Jenkins around this event saying that he had a list of the officials who had made themselves available and also sent 3 or 4 emails out to the Regions regarding the event asking anyone available to contact Andrew.

### **5 Actions from Previous Meeting:**

#### **a Management Training & Shadowing:**

JT confirmed with ZH that this had been covered.

#### **b Succession Planning:**

SM said she had a brief conversation with ZH and others in the WA office about getting more people involved in committees going forward as this is not just an issue with this committee but with committees across the UK and other sports. SM is going to put for WA to take ownership as this needs to be a WA policy to Succession Planning that covers all Boards/Committees and not just this committee coming up with a way forward.

JT asked SH for this to be put to GC that a recommendation from this committee that a working party/group should be set up to look at this across all disciplines within WA. LH agreed that this should go to GC as it is an operational matter.

**ACTION: SH to request the matter to be included on next GC agenda**

**c Officials Recruitment:**

ZH has discussed with RLP about starting the Regional days and how they are organised. Possibly looking at a date in December but if not then in the New Year.

**d Athlete to Official:**

ZH/SH updated that nothing to report on this and it will be an ongoing item. Put on the agenda for future meetings.

**6 Reports:**

**a Regional Issue:**

North Region no report

West Region no report

South Region JM had nothing to report

East Region JT stated that they held their AGM but still no one came forward for the official's role. SH will stand in until someone comes forward.

RLP asked do we know why people are so reluctant to become involved. Do we need to pitch opportunities in various ways or is it that people do not want to be involved. JM said some of it may be cultural and it is not just an athletics issue and is a state of the times. JT said that the pandemic has not help as a number of people are stepping back from various roles as they have "enjoyed" the time away from the sport.

**7 Any Other Business:**

AC spoke about the 40 year award as he had an email from John Elward to see if he had done that length of time. AC will send through to SH about who has and who he thinks is due the award.

AC brought up the licence renewal and it is from the date of when you renew and not the date on the licence.

GW agreed with AC on the licence renewal. Also to just confirm that it was the UKA 40 year award and not the WA one.

PJ spoke of John Penny being put through for the 40 year award.

SH asked if this was just a name nominated put forward or do we have to put a piece about the nominee to a panel.

LH said that she was required to produce a list going back a long time as evidence and write a summary.

SH said that she has put forward a few names for the 15yr & 25yr WA awards but will not say who as this is still an ongoing process.

JT closed the meeting thanking all and the next meeting is on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021.