



Welsh Athletics Joint Track and Field Committee

Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 8th December 2021.

Present

Joyce Tomala (JT), Lynne Brier (LB), Lynette Harries (LH), Rhiannon Linington-Payne (RLP), Jen Stone (JS), Bethan Akanbi-Mortimer, Darran Williams (DH), Crispin Backsall (CB), Sue Hooper (SH), Jake Morgan (JM), Adrian Palmer (AP)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from KE.

JT welcomed JS as the representative from the South Wales region.

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest.

3. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON

JT was re-elected as Chair of the Track and Field Committee.

4. CO-OPTED MEMBERS

LH and BAM were both re-elected as co-opted members of the Track and Field Committee.

5. WELSH ATHLETICS COMPETITION UPDATE

a. Indoor 2021 / 2022

RLP reported that the first Junior Open on 9th January, Welsh Senior and Under 15 Championships on 29th and 30th January, Welsh Junior Championships on 5th and 6th of February will all go ahead at the moment and would be confirmed in accordance with Welsh Government updates.

RLP confirmed that South Wales region withdrew their championships from the junior open events. This has not been well-received from some members of the community via social media, but as far as she was aware, their championship programme would resume in the outdoor track and field season. RLP expressed her concern about the amount of time taken to inform Welsh Athletics and the relevant clubs about this decision, as well as the reaction and comments made by a minority of parents within some of the relevant clubs.

JS said that the decision had been widely shared on the South Wales regional Facebook page. JS said that the region was experiencing problems recruiting volunteers and there was lack of commitment from track and field clubs. JS went on to say that social media responses had come from parents not club officials and that there was an expectation amongst parents that events take place, but a reluctance to help out.

LH expressed her concern that athletes are being disappointed and talented youngsters will be lost to other sports. LH suggested that the help of the Governing Body be sought, with the possibility of holding a meeting with all track and field clubs to discuss this matter and target the right people within the clubs to come on board and support.

CB contributed that North Wales region had communicated to parents that no teams would be taken to any events or competitions, unless parent volunteers come forward as officials and this had actually worked.

DW said that it was also an issue in West Wales, with only three from West Wales turned up to support the open meeting.

Action: JS to feed this discussion back to the South Wales region and refer the concern back to Welsh Athletics in order to gain support for the region.

b. Outdoor Fixtures 2022

RLP shared the following information about outdoor fixtures:

Welsh Championships

Senior and Under 15 Championships – 11th and 12th June in Cardiff

Under 13, Under 17 and Under 20 Championships - 13th and 14th August in Newport

Regional Championships

RLP confirmed that the weekend 14th and 15th May had been allocated for this.

JT said that the venue for South and East regions is not yet confirmed.

North Wales Regional Championships will take place on Saturday 14th May.

West Wales Regional Championships will take place on Sunday 15th May (venue to be confirmed)

Inter-regional Championships

RLP confirmed that Sunday 10th July has been allocated for this competition. JT confirmed that it had been provisionally booked for Newport, pending the situation with the cage.

Welsh International

RLP confirmed that two fixtures were currently pencilled in:

Wednesday 13th July - pre-Commonwealth Games Grand Prix as send-off to Commonwealth Games team.

Saturday 30th July – Welsh International match

RLP went on to say that these fixtures could possibly be amalgamated into one fixture, mainly due to calendar congestion and cost.

Junior League Meetings

RLP said that Welsh Athletics were looking at altering the structure, introducing more of a multi-disciplinary format, with three semi-regional leagues and the North being included. RLP went on to say that more work was needed on the scoring system, and she would be holding a webinar for clubs once this had been settled. The dates provided to the committee were:

Saturday 30th April

Saturday 28th May

Saturday 16th July

Saturday 20th August

6. DISCUSSION

a. Appointment of Track and Field Team Managers

JT reminded the committee that it was the remit of this committee to appoint team managers for international fixtures. JT asked AP about the DNA match, with a view to appointing team managers for this match.

AP suggested that this point be raised again in the next meeting for further discussion.

Action: to put on next agenda

b. Review of Track and Field Championships

RLP, JT, SH and DW had met to review feedback from both athletes and officials and had received good feedback for both championships in general. RLP shared the following information:

Removing Under 15 athletes from the Junior Championships and placing them entirely in the Senior Championships had been well-received. Junior athletes said that they had enjoyed warming up and competing alongside senior athletes.

Late changes to timetable caused some concern and it has been considered putting 3000m for Under 15 athletes into alternative events specific meetings, ensuring that

they do not clash with British Milers fixtures etc. JM welcomed this move and praised the structure of the championships.

Some issues were raised about equipment and knowledge of staff at Newport. RLP confirmed that Welsh Athletics would be working with Newport to make relevant improvements, especially with issues surrounding the cage.

The seeding system failed because of a new streaming system and the company used not being fit for purpose. Welsh Athletics will be looking to establish a partnership with Vinco for 2022 to cover certain events.

Volunteers and officials roles need to be made clear to everyone, with some volunteers needing to be reminded that they have designated roles and logistical roles that need to be filled on the day. RLP referred to call room staffing and some negative perceptions of the role. Zoe Holloway is to arrange some call room courses in Wales and there will be discussion about making it a formal discipline at UKA level to attract more volunteers into the role.

Separate risk assessment are to be formulated for external throws areas, including spectator areas and access and egress routes for athletes and officials.

c. Medallists at Track and Field Championships

RLP shared with the committee that a number of English athletes had questioned why they weren't awarded medals, despite performing very well at the championships.

JT reminded the committee that the winner always receives a medal and the next three Welsh athletes also receive medals, irrelevant of where they came in the competition. Only one non-Welsh athlete receives a medal and only if they win the competition.

Three different options were discussed with regard to awarding medals at senior and Under 20 championships:

- to award two sets of medals so that both Welsh and non-Welsh athletes can medal.
- to reverse the current format so that the first three athletes in each competition receive medals, alongside the first Welsh athlete, if they come outside the first three positions.
- to follow English and Scottish models, where only the first three athletes receive medals, irrelevant of their national affiliation.

RLP confirmed that she has been costing one of the options to award two sets of medals so that both Welsh and non-Welsh athletes can medal. RLP said that there would be a substantial increase in costings to medals.

DW reminded the committee that we are the only nation who do not award the first three in the competition.

CB asked what happens if a non-Welsh athlete wins a competition. Do they become the Welsh champion? RLP replied that they become the Welsh open champion.

Following this, DW suggested that we also need to streamline our current arrangements with regard to championship titles and records, which can be quite complicated, with championship records, Welsh records and all-comer records etc all needing to be regularly researched and updated.

All committee members were invited to express their opinions on how the medals should be awarded.

The two favoured options were:

- to award two sets of medals.
- only the first three athletes receive medals.

It was unanimously agreed that this should be discussed in the next meeting, with representatives from the senior athlete voice group being invited to the next meeting.

Action: LB to contact Bethan Davies to invite two senior athletes to the next meeting.

7. ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

a. Regional Representatives

8. REPORTS

a. Regional Issues

South Wales: JT said that the committee needed to know who would be representing the South Wales region. JS said that the biggest issue in South Wales was recruitment of officers into key posts. JS said that she would try to attend until a representative had been appointed.

East Wales: JT said that their regional meeting was to be held on Wednesday 15th December so updates will be shared in the next meeting.

North Wales: CB said that North Wales would be holding their indoor championships in Deeside, with 300m, 600m and 800m being held in Manchester.

West Wales: JM needed to leave the meeting, but JT stated that three West Wales officials had been present and active in the previous weekend's indoor meeting in NIAC.

b. Officials Committee

SH said that the officials committee had met on 17th November and the following information was shared:

A new chairperson has been selected, with JT standing down and SM taking over in this role. SH thanked JT for her commitment to the officials committee.

The officials committee discussed co-opted members and decided that various people would be co-opted in for different purpose throughout the year, depending on what needed to be discussed

They had received a good response from officials for the indoor meetings.

The officials conference is to be held on Sunday 6th March and suggestions for content would be welcome.

Eight slots have been awarded to Welsh Level 4 officials between the Grand Prix on 19th February and the British Indoor Championships the following weekend.

JT asked for a new representative from the track and field committee to attend officials committee meetings. LB offered to swap responsibilities and be the representative on the officials committees because it is very difficult for her to attend general council meetings due to coaching commitments.

LH suggested that AC be asked to represent track and field on the officials committee.

Action: LB to contact AC and ask him.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 9th February

11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 9th February

Wednesday 6th April

Wednesday 8th June

Wednesday 3rd August

Wednesday 12th October

Wednesday 7th December

All future dates were approved by the committee.

