

# Minutes of Track & Field Committee Meeting

## Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024



WELSH ATHLETICS  
ATHLETAU CYMRU

### Present:

Joyce Tomala (JT), Lynne Brier (LB), Lynette Harries (LH), Dai Williams (DaiW), Darran Williams (DW), Euan Coney (EC), Lisa Champion (LC), Crispin Backshall (CB), Lee Hayward (LeeH)

### 1. Apologies:

Sue Hooper (report submitted on behalf of officials committee)

### 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None declared

### 3. Actions from Previous Minutes:

- a. **DW** has spoken to James Williams and confirmed that Welsh Athletics changes to age group webinars will be taking place (dates to be confirmed). However, UKA will be holding a nationwide webinar for everyone on 6<sup>th</sup> November between 6pm –and 8:30. Anyone with access to Trinity should have received the link for this. DW will share the link with whoever requires it. **DW** informed the committee that James Williams has already disseminated some information on age group changes to General Council.
- b. **LB** received and shared comprehensive reports regarding performance and performance development, including outstanding performances at the Paris Olympics, as well as updates on the structure and activities of both national and regional development programmes (NDP and RDP) from Chris Type, James Williams and Steve Mitchel. **LB** thanked them for their reports. Chris Type also referred the committee to the performance section included in the annual report for 2023 / 2024, which provides a holistic overview of performance pathways and performance development throughout the year.
- c. **EC** and **DW** both provided an update on WA staffing structure, as requested by **LB** and **JT**. Apart from one or two recent changes, the Welsh Athletics website provides an accurate account of current staffing structures.

### 4. WA Updates:

**EC** and **DW** shared the following updates:

#### a. Competition Updates

##### i. Indoor Dates 2024/2025 (all dates live on the Welsh Athletics website)

1. Junior Opens:
  - December 1<sup>st</sup> – Welsh Athletics Indoor Open Day 1
  - December 15<sup>th</sup> – Cardiff Met Christmas classic (includes Welsh 3000m Championships)
  - January 5<sup>th</sup> – Welsh Athletics Junior Open Day 2
  - January 12<sup>th</sup> – Cardiff Met New Year Non Thomas Endurance Grand Prix
  - January 26<sup>th</sup> – Cardiff Met Indoor Sprints Grand Prix
2. Senior and Under 17 Championships – 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> January
3. Junior Championships (U13, U15 and U20) – 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> February

**EC** said that standards and maximum numbers are to be introduced for specific events within both Indoor and Outdoor Senior Championships only. These will only be for senior events that have exceeded capacity in recent years. This is to ease pressures on both officials and competitors, as well the timetable.

Following a question from **JT** about selection standards for international representation, **EC** confirmed that these standards will be more relaxed than

the performance standards set for selection purposes only by the performance team.

ii. **Outdoor Championship updates 2025**

1. Senior and Under 17 Championships - June 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> -
2. Junior Age Group Championships (U13 / U15 / U20) - June 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>
3. North, South and East Wales Regional Championships – May 10<sup>th</sup> (venues to be confirmed)  
West Wales Regional Championships – venue May 11<sup>th</sup> (venue to be confirmed).

**EC** said that junior outdoor championships have been moved from August to June, based on feedback from athletes and coaches, siting August as too late in the season for various reasons e.g. clashes with holidays and August being too late, with younger athletes being too tired by August. Dates have also been changed to accommodate changes in key dates at UKA level.

**EC** said that Under 17 athletes have been included in Senior Championships this year to avoid clashes with UKA dates and the YDL timetable at Under 15 level. This only affects the outdoor date, but it was decided to make the change indoors as a trial for outdoors.

**EC** said that changes have also been made to accommodate trial opportunities for European Under 23 Championships in 2025, with some specific events for Under 23 athletes being incorporated into Welsh Championships. Welsh athletics are still communicating with UKA to finalise plans and exact details are yet to be confirmed.

**DaiW** communicated the following dates for Welsh Schools events, including SIAB and requested that officials are provided with a full list of events that include schools competitions:

- Welsh Schools Championships – July 5<sup>th</sup>
- Welsh Schools Cup and Plate Match – July 9<sup>th</sup> (to be confirmed).
- SIAB - July 19<sup>th</sup> (hosted by England)

**LeeH** asked if standards had been set for outdoor championships and **EC** replied that they had not yet been decided upon. Welsh athletics want to see how suitable the standards are for indoors first.

iii. **Inter-Regional T & F Championships 2025**

**LC** confirmed that this will be hosted by West Wales on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July, either in Swansea or Carmarthen. The date is confirmed but the venue is yet to be finalised.

On behalf of West Wales Committee, **LC** asked the Track and Field Committee what they felt the general interest in the event would be, considering that it is to be held in West Wales this year. Concerns surround travel, time and cost implications.

**JT** said that a meeting had been held, with regional chairs and secretaries in attendance, and nobody said that they wouldn't be attending Inter-Regional Championships in West Wales.

**CB** said that the North Wales athletes would be keen to defend their win from last year and the region will be very pro-active in promoting the event.

**CB** asked about improving the quality of the trophies for Inter-Regional championships. This will be added to the agenda for the December meeting.

**iv. Event Specific Meetings 2025**

April 11<sup>th</sup> – North Wales Endurance Open 1

**EC** also shared a provisional timetable for Run With The Wind, BMC, throws and jumps events that are all yet to be confirmed. These will be released at a later date.

**v. Welsh Junior Competitions 2025**

**EU** shared the following dates and **DW** said that meetings were planned to finalise arrangements. **JT** asked for minutes to be taken for these meetings.

April 5<sup>th</sup> – North Wales Junior League 1 – Colwyn Bay

April 12<sup>th</sup> – south and East Wales Junior League 1 – Venue TBC

April 12<sup>th</sup> – West Wales Junior League 1 - Venue TBC

May 17<sup>th</sup> – South and East Wales Junior League 2 – Venue TBC

May 18<sup>th</sup> - West Wales Junior League 2 - Venue TBC

June 7<sup>th</sup> - North Wales Junior League 2 – Deeside

June 7<sup>th</sup> - South and East Wales Junior League 3 – Venue TBC

June 8<sup>th</sup> – West Wales Junior League 3 – Venue TBC

June 21<sup>st</sup> – North Wales Junior League 3 – Treborth

**vi. Date for 2024 Outdoor Competitions Review**

**DW** and **EC** to send **JT** some possible dates to meet in Cardiff.

**b. WA Performance update**

**LB** shared a report provided by Chris Type. This included information on a sports injury clinic, strength and conditioning pathway delivered by Cardiff Met and training events for athletes on the National Development Programme (NDP).

**c. Opentrack results program update**

**DW** confirmed that Opentrack are carrying out updates to improve their functionality and this won't impact on Welsh Athletics events. **DW** and Nathan Jones will be training people on the use of Opentrack before, during and after events that rely on Opentrack for results.

**5. DISCUSSION**

**a. Training for Competition Organisers**

**DW** confirmed that there is a step-by-step document on organising athletics events.

**Action** - **DW** will look into this.

**JT** also has an inter-regional handbook that offers steps on organising athletics events.

**Action** – **JT** to look into her archives for this document.

**LeeH** also said that he had a YDL document that offered useful advice on organising athletics events.

**Action** - A group to come together to provide instructions on organising athletics events that can be used by new / less-experienced competition providers throughout Wales.

**b. Proposed Age Group changes**

**JT** expressed concerns that not everyone is fully aware of the age group changes and **DW** reminded the committee of the information that he provided at the start of the meeting i.e. forthcoming UKA and Welsh Athletics webinars.

**DW** said that there is a powerpoint presentation in circulation that explains all the changes and there is no new information since this presentation.

**EC** said that he believed that James Williams planned on meeting with the Welsh Schools Committee as there was possibly a separate piece of legislation that applied to them.

**Action:** LB to communicate with James Williams on this matter.

## 6. REPORTS:

### a. Welsh Schools

DaiW shared the following information, including key dates:

- Welsh Schools had a very successful summer season with great performances in Welsh Schools and Cup and Plate Match.
- SIAB was one of the most successful for Wales in a number of years, with a large medal haul and excellent performances.
- DaiW thanked Welsh Athletics staff, particularly the competition team for organising events throughout the summer.
- The last Welsh Schools Committee meeting included the usual concerns around finance and age group changes.
- 16<sup>th</sup> November – Inter-Schools Cross Country Competition which is combined with the Regional Championships in Newtown.
- On the same day (16<sup>th</sup> November), the Combined Events International will be held in Glasgow. Fifteen athletes will travel to Glasgow, three teams of four athletes and a senior women's team of three athletes. The clash of dates with the cross country in Newtown will not impact the athletes but will split Welsh Schools staff in half.
- 23<sup>rd</sup> November – Welsh Schools AGM
- Dates for next summer have already been communicated earlier on in the meeting.

### b. Regional Issues

- **East Wales** - Nothing from East Wales
- **South Wales** - Nothing from South Wales
- **West Wales** have organised their indoor championships:  
Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> January – jumps (Swansea)  
Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February – sprints and shotput (Swansea)  
These events will hopefully be used to train new officials on shotput and photo finish.  
West Wales will also hold some events in Cardiff on the same day as the South and East Wales regionals.  
JT highlighted the need for more volunteers for registration, presentation etc for this meeting and DW said that he had already emailed the relevant people in each region to communicate this message.
- **North Wales** - **CB** confirmed that North Wales have been working on dates for competitions next year. It is positive that North Wales now have additional venues in action that can be utilised for competitions and have also benefited greatly from the support of Amy Edwards as their competition organiser in North Wales.

c. **Officials Committee**

**LB** read out a report from Sue Hooper in her absence. The report referred to the following:

- Availability of officials for indoor events.
- Next meeting of officials to be held on 30<sup>th</sup> October.
- Cardiff Met will organise the officials for their four indoor events and SH will assist them if necessary.
- One field judge has applied for Level 4 accreditation and should know by late November if the application is successful.
- Some issues and discussions around officials are ongoing e.g.  
Overview of the old and new officials pathway;  
Effective sharing of information on rule changes with clubs, parents, coaches and athletes etc  
Mentoring new officials  
Expenses and accommodation

**JT** said that she has requested that someone from the Officials Committee attends future Track and Field Meetings.

Sue Hooper was thanked in her absence for her report.

7. **Any Other Business**

a. **Welsh Records Update**

**DW** shared an update on Welsh records throughout the summer and all records were accepted by the committee.

**DW** referred to a record that had been broken by a female Under 15 athlete. The record had been broken in a mixed gender race, which is not usually accepted. However, the athlete had also broken the record at England Age Group Championships in Birmingham. This was accepted by the committee.

**LH** asked what what happen to old records

- b. **LB** shared an email that she received from Neal Merry, a coach and trustee of Swansea Harriers, stating his concern about lack of competition opportunities for senior athletes in Wales towards the latter end of the season. His concern was that unless athletes were in a NAL team, there was very little opportunity for them to compete in Wales. Neal Merry pointed out that not all athletes were able to travel over the border to compete in England, due to work commitments and financial implications, transport etc. **NM** made several suggestions for discussion that were shared with the committee. The committee all agreed with Neal's concerns, but also referred to staff welfare, with responsibility for organising additional events falling on the same people. Concerns about asking the same officials to carry out additional voluntary work were also raised, as well as lack of track availability because of football matches, repairs etc and the cost of hiring tracks.

**DW** reminded the committee that Welsh Athletics will always encourage and support clubs to hold their own open meetings to increase the amount of competition opportunities in Wales.

**EU** agreed with the content of the email and said that they were working on more fixtures towards the latter end of next year, especially with Welsh Championships being earlier on in the season, hence the Run With the Wind opens still being in draft form. However, he also said that track hire was becoming much more expensive for them.

**Action – LB** to contact Chris Moss and James Williams to invite them to either the December or February meeting for further discussion.

- c. **JT** referred to an email from Tony Clements, secretary of Swansea Harriers, requesting clarity on eligibility for junior athletes to compete at Welsh Championships. This was in relation to athletes who had not initially been permitted to compete at Welsh Championships until they had proved their eligibility upon registration for Welsh Championships.

**DaiW** asked if the athletes were Welsh based because, according to Welsh Schools rules, if they are resident in Wales and attend a school in Wales, this deems them eligible to compete at regional and national school's championships. **DaiW** asked why the rules for eligibility to compete at Welsh Championships can't align with this. It was suggested that the rules are relaxed, just for junior athletes (U13, U15, U17), so that all junior athletes who are affiliated to Welsh Athletics, can compete at Welsh Championships. This should hopefully support junior athletes to remain in the sport, without impacting on selection policies for Welsh representation at internationals.

**Action – Referral** to General Council for further discussion.

- d. **Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December

**DW** shared his apologies that he will not be attending this meeting because he will be working at the Cardiff Met Varsity Match.

- e. **Dates of Future Meetings:**

04/12/2024 (others tbc following WA AGM)

**Meeting ended at 7:45pm**