

**WELSH ATHLETICS ROAD/CROSS COUNTRY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 17th JUNE 2020**

ACTION

PRESENT: -

Alex Donald, Graham Finlayson, Chris Jones, Steve Jones, Sharon Leech, Rhiannon Linnington-Payne, Peter Sowerby, Kevin Tobin

APOLOGIES : -

Nikki Haines

MATTERS ARISING

- RLP provided an update on current competition programme. All restrictions imposed by WA/UKA will be lifted on 30th June, however the situation will then be governed by Government guidelines. At present, all competitions have been cancelled/postponed for July. It is likely that 'pilot' events will be held before all other events are granted a license. These pilot events will trial social distancing measures such as wave starts, limited number of athletes, etc. RLP confirmed that the return of competition would look very different to that which we have been accustomed to, with SJ suggesting that social distancing measures will be in place until a vaccine is found. This will require competition providers to be innovative in working within the health and safety guidelines, to ensure safe competition for all involved. Some competitions may take place virtually, as an alternative. The Welsh Road Relays will be one such event, details will follow closer to the time. Some other events may also change their format to relay events, which could take place in various locations, to limit numbers gathering and to limit distance travelled.
- A decision on the Cardiff Cross Challenge and the Inter-Schools and Inter-Regional Cross Country Championships will not be made until July, following further announcements by the Government.
- It was confirmed that St John have postponed all activities until the end of August, which has implications for race providers.
- It is likely that smaller events of up to a thousand participants will be given the go-ahead earlier than larger events with 5000+ participants. Road competitions also face the difficulty of spectators adding to social distancing issues, this is not such a problem for off-road events. RLP is currently in discussions and will update the committee and ask for their input, as soon as she has further information.
- The proposed 10K series was discussed. It was suggested that as the 2020 series will now not go ahead as planned, the series be looked at again for 2021 with a possibility of mixed distances instead of each race being a 10K. KT/AD to discuss with JW

KT/AD

- The Committee confirmed that Road Championship applications for new season 2021 should be advertised on the WA website and on social media, so that race providers have time to apply to host the events. Some (possibly all) of the road championship events will not have been held in 2020 due to the current situation. Those who were due to host in 2020 will be welcome to apply to host in 2021 for the next two year cycle.

WA

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- SL updated committee on GC committee meeting of 16th June 2020. The main points were that there is a return to athletics roadmap on the WA website, this will be updated to reflect all current restrictions (or lifting of restrictions). Many event providers, including WA, are offering virtual competitions via the Opentrack platform, these are proving quite popular with athletes. Track facilities will be opening up based on local and national Government guidelines, athletes and coaches will have to adhere to social distancing measures in place. Most WA Clubs have now affiliated, however membership remains at 64%, primarily lower among seniors. New appointments at WA include JW as permanent CEO, two new Directors to the Board and Sam Gordon as comms assistant. Some staff continue to be furloughed until 31st July, the situation will be reviewed then.

2020 ROAD & CROSS COUNTRY COMPETITIONS PROGRAMME (*all subject to change based on COVID-19 government guidelines)

- Welsh 5K Champs, Whitchurch Cardiff August 30th 2020
- Virual Welsh Road Relays, September 12th 2020
- Welsh Marathon Champs October 4th 2020, London
- Anglo Celtic Plate 100Km, Boddington, October 4th 2020
- Cardiff Cross Challenge, October 2020
- Welsh 10K Champs, Cardiff Bay November 15th 2020
- Welsh Inter-Regional/Inter-Schools Cross Country, December 2020

AOB

KT suggested that British Athletics re-introduce British championships on the Road and introduce British Championships at Cross Country for club teams and individuals. Such opportunities would serve as valuable stepping stones for athletes and good opportunities to compete at a higher level.

Road: In the past there were British Championships for clubs and individuals at Marathon, 1/2 marathon, 10 miles and 10k and also both

Road Relays. There is currently a Road Relay Championship for Juniors which England Athletics are trying to exclude Wales from.

Cross Country:With regard to Cross Country, Liverpool is a team championship but only for the team winners of the various Home Countries Championships, why not make it open?

It would also be great if the current English Cross Country Relays played host to the British Championships (which Wales are currently not allowed to compete in).

Without such initiatives, apart from the loss of competition for our athletes it may lead to some leaving Welsh clubs to compete for English Teams. CJ agreed that there is scope for this and that a suggestion be made to the Home Countries.

DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

- Wed 15th July 2020, 5pm. RLP to send out a Microsoft Teams invite to members for another virtual meeting.