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WELSH ATHLETICS
ATHLETAU CYMRU

Welsh Athletics Track and Field Committee.
Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 24th September 2018.
Venue: Welsh Institute of Sport Sophia Gardens

Present

Lynne Brier **(LB)** (Chair); Joyce Tomala **(JT)** (East); Darran Williams **(DW)**; Rhiannon Linington-Payne **(RLP)**; Kath Elias **(KE)** (WSAA); Tom Marley **(TM)**; Chris Jones **(CJ)**; Adrian Palmer **(AP)**

1. Apologies

Crispin Backshall, Alan Currie, Judith Gooding, Sue Hooper

2. Matters arising from previous minutes 2.1 Point 4 – **LB** confirmed that congratulations cards had been sent to GB-selected athletes on behalf of the Track & Field Committee.

2.2 Point 5 – matter regarding Regional Representatives still needs chasing up as there is still no representative from either the West or the South on the committee.

2.3 Point 6 – **JT** reported that Cardiff Archers finished 6th in the YDL LAG Final, and were the top team from the Midlands. Congratulations were offered to the Cardiff Archers club.

2.4 Point 3.2 – **LB** stated that she did not want to be misinterpreted as wanting to put extra work on the officials at Championships – rather that having the Championships over 2 days may free up entire weekends during the season.

3. Triple Jump – An update presented by Adrian Palmer

AP presented an update on the situation regarding Triple Jump for the younger age groups. Increasingly we are being asked to bring Triple Jump back into the competition programme for U15 athletes. A pilot exercise has been undertaken with the Schools and no problems were experienced. Other Home Nations also have Triple Jump in their competition programmes for that age group. There is scope for Welsh Athletics to include in their competition programmes and the committee was asked what their feelings were towards this.

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The event would be controlled with limited run-ups (10 metres) as it was in the Schools pilot exercise. A number of coaches have offered to run some development programmes across the winter. It was agreed that U15 Triple Jump events would be re-introduced into the Championship programme, but not as a Championship event for the forthcoming seasons. Rather it would be an invitation event based on attendance at the Development Programme opportunities over the winter. Minimum board would be a 7m board.

DW asked whether we could include the event in the Junior League, but it was agreed that it was not appropriate for this environment due to the nature of league matches and the need for clubs to score points.

AP to go out to the community to see if they will buy-in to this process and will feed the response back to the Track & Field Committee.

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4. Welsh Athletics League

RLP presented various points for consideration regarding a re-structure of the Welsh Athletics League (senior). It has become apparent that the format/structure/rules of the league need addressing. WA have been asked if they can incorporate the Masters League into the Welsh Athletics League as their league is no longer running. The day needs to be made more engaging so as to entice more athletes to compete again.

AP asked if the standard of competition is high enough to entice athletes to compete? Balance between a good social event and an environment to produce a high standard of performance. What are we trying to use the league for? We need to clarify where we want to end up with the league so that we can work towards that rather than trying to find a short-term fix. Athletes no longer perceive the Welsh Athletics League as a stepping stone towards better league competition.

CJ stated that as an NGB we should recognise that the competition structure has changed and the strategy going forward should reflect this.

TM suggested that if the League element was stopped and the meetings were just run as open meetings, that the attendance by athletes would decline further. Results from the recent consultation period shows that there is an ever-increased demand for the event-specific events rather than the 'whole-day' format.

It was decided that WA should contact Senior athletes via a survey asking for their views of the Welsh Athletics League & whether they value it.

Alternative strategies need to be looked at for Officials provision, as clubs do not (and often cannot) fulfil their quota. The officials education pathway is too complex and people don't want to engage with it. **JT** stated that this issue is not exclusive to Wales – all home countries are facing an issue with Officials.

Should WA be directly responsible for the delivery of the Welsh Athletics League? British Athletics are not responsible for the delivery of the British Athletics League. Aim to move towards a similar structure. Long term potential benefits of upskilling more volunteers.

Decided that WA should contact the clubs involved with the league if they would want to take over the league.

5. Welsh Inter Regional Championships

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TM / RLP presented points for consideration regarding the restructure of the Welsh Athletics Inter Regional Championships. The traditional date cannot be used next year (2019) as the weekend will be used for the British Athletics Championships (later date due to the late World Championships). Initially a new date of Saturday 8th June 2019 was proposed to stage the Championships. This is a few weeks after the Regional Championships and so would bear more relevance for selections. **KE** pointed out that this is during the exam period, but the options are limited with regard to alternative dates.

It was discussed whether the Inter Regional Championships is still valued in the competition calendar as athletes are often competing against the same people as in either the Welsh Championships or Leagues. **TM** suggest that the Inter Regionals take place within Welsh Championships, a similar format to the England/CAU Championships. **CJ** stated that similar has already happened away from Track & Field as athletes are becoming over-raced and agreed with the suggested merge.

LB confirmed that reports from external sources on this year's Inter Regional Championships were discussed at the outdoor debrief meeting.

All expressed support for merging the Inter Regional Championships into the respective Welsh Championship events.

JT proposed that the Senior age group (and potentially U20) is removed from Regional Championships & was seconded by **LB**. This will be discussed by the South & East regions at their next committee meetings & it is recommended that the North & West Regional Committees discuss at theirs.

6. Integration of Junior events into Senior Championships (indoor and outdoor)

RLP presented item on the Junior Championships events that take place at the Senior event. Discussed that there is still a need for this to reduce the burden on the incredibly busy Junior weekend. Decided that U17/U20 events shouldn't be moved across to avoid confusion as to whether athletes are competing in their own age group or stepping up.

Decided that U15 events only should be chosen to move across to the Senior event.

7. Outdoor season debrief summary

TM presented a summary of discussions at the Outdoor Season Debrief. Main point around communication and ensure that communications that are sent out are read by athletes, parents, officials etc. Issues regarding facilities have been fed back to Chris Moss, Welsh Athletics. Also continue trying to get more officials in order to successfully run the Championships. **TM** stressed that it was a very good outdoor season and thanked all officials, volunteers, coaches, athletes and parents for the season.

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8. AOB

RLP – Fixtures meeting scheduled for Sunday 4th November at Sport Wales National Centre. Invitation to be sent out to clubs in due course.

KE – stated that this was likely to be her last meeting representing Welsh Schools as she is stepping down from their committee.

TM – no date for UKA Fixture Conference at time of meeting, but meetings with them this week may clarify more.

TM – asked if there is anyone additional who would benefit the Track & Field Committee e.g. those in charge of the Junior Leagues. **RLP** suggested that an athlete representative may be beneficial. Clubs reps to be discussed at the AGM. **JT** stated that the biggest concern is ensuring that the regions are all represented.

LB – the process for joining/resigning from the committee isn't necessarily clear at the moment. **TM** – option to go 'out to advert' for places on the committee – ask for applicants to advertise to us their specialities.

Date of next meeting – Wednesday 21st November 2018, 18.30 start at Sport Wales National Centre.

Agenda items for next meeting to be received by the secretary for collection and distribution. AOB to be presented in the meeting.

The meeting finished at 20.40pm