

## **Welsh Athletics Board Meeting Minutes**

**30th March 2026.**

*Meeting held in remotely via video link.*

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**Present:** Lynne Brier [LB], Laura Mason [LM], Jonathan Ford [JF], Nigel Walker [NW], Catherine Lewis [CL], Fay Benningwood [FB], Chris Gough [CG], Steve Perks [SP], James Williams [JW], Dan Clements [DC], Phil Draper [PD], Lorna Kerr [LK], Tom Overton [TO]

**Apologies:** N/A

**Circulated papers:**

- **Board Papers March 2026.pdf**
  - o **Agenda**
  - o **Board Meeting Minutes January 2026**
  - o **Financial Update March 2026**
  - o **Welsh Athletics Role – Chair of the Board**
  - o **CEO Report March 2026**
  - o **Commonwealth Games Update**
  - o **Safeguarding Report**
  - o **Sport Wales Update**

### **1. Welcome**

SP welcomes the board to the meeting.

### **2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**

N/A

### **3. Previous Minutes and actions**

JW updated on the plans for WA to support other NGB's. PD presented concerns on the agreement's ambiguity and proposed a full legal review of the agreement. JW reassured that WA have taken out an additional indemnity insurance to provide additional securities. Timelines do not allow for this to be undertaken before the process starts but updates will be given to the Board via email once this has been completed. NW asked about the level of exposure before having the legal document in place. PD answered as soon as the work starts although JW added that the level is low. JF agreed that the legal review must take place but that it would be low risk to begin as soon as possible.

*The minutes were accepted by the Board.*

SP announced to the Board that this was Lorna Kerr's final Board meeting following the handing in of her notice.

**For approval**

### **4. 2026/27 Budget**

CG gave a brief overview of the budget proposal for the upcoming year. This included the reason for the proposed loss position which involved some exceptional costs associated with the Commonwealth Games as well as budgeting for lower commercial income.

JW added a few notes surrounding staffing and cost of living. This included the fact that there has been a high level of staff turnover at WA recently including two members of the senior management team. It was recognised that this is largely due to pay and WA are trying to support this by not recruiting like-for-like to save costs. Some key projects have also been delayed to support this.

LB asked about the salary banding at WA. JW answered that WA do not do salary bands and that the challenge is that WA wouldn't be able to do much about it other than rationalising the team or having fewer people. This would be difficult due to the capacity challenges WA already faces. JW also reassured that this is not just a WA issue but a wider section issue and that where WA cannot provide the salary, CDP opportunities can be offered.

NW asked on salary benchmarking as well as the impact on staff morale. JW answered that a benchmarking exercise was carried out a while ago within NGBs, but this has not been carried on. In terms of morale JW answered that the biggest risk is burnout with small teams being expected to deliver a large volume of work. There was some reassurance that it is not just Welsh Athletics in the position.

JF highlighted his support for JW.

DC asked if there was any further support from SW for the CWG. JW answered that there wasn't outside of the lottery investment.

*The budget was approved by the Board.*

## **5. Cost of Living increase proposal**

JW presented a proposed cost of living salary increase for staff of 2%.

JF highlighted his scepticism on a blanket percentage increase. LK supported this due to how the proposal would be received by staff. JW responded that WA have used a scale approach in the past, but it is now necessary for middle managers to have that same uplift as those at the lower end. JW also reassured that there are uplifts happening throughout the year with shifts in roles etc.

CG supported the proposal put forward highlighting the fairness.

TO agreed with the proposal as well as commenting on the fact that sport is not a highly paid industry and the need to think beyond pay increases. This included suggestions such as working with Sport Wales, WSA, mentoring schemes, development opportunities. JW agreed with the points made and reflected on the challenge of the sport growing without the resource behind it also growing.

*The cost-of-living increase proposal was approved by the Board.*

SP highlighted the good job JW and the team were doing in regard to the development of people within the context of their roles.

PD asked about the consideration of a 4.5/4 day working week to offer flexibility as an incentive. JW answered that this is being spoken about with some staff already.

## **6. Nomination process for new Chair of Welsh Athletics**

SP raised the point of the nomination process for the new Chair of WA. The document was not read in full detail as it was circulated prior to the meeting, but JW will send round the role description as well as the appointment panel process.

LB asked on the four-year term and if it was statutory across all governing bodies or was just WA specific. JW answered that WA came on board with UKA terms of office when brought into the UKA governance review. It also aligns better to the Commonwealth Games cycle.

JF asked on any risks with the timeline. JW answered that there should be minimal risk considering the process gets approved asap. An element of transition and shadowing has been factored in.

SP and JW have reviewed and updated the job description. The appointment does not need approval by the membership.

*The process was approved by the Board.*

## **For information & approval**

### **7. CWG 2026 update**

JW presented the overview document written by Chris Type. The team wanted to familiarise the Board with the nominations process and the athletes. The para window has now closed. The document was presented as clear and robust to ensure a strong nomination to Team Wales. This means the document includes preparation aspects as well as standards.

JW presented the want to nominate Catherine Lewis as the additional independent board member on the panel as well as Bethan Davies as the minute taker for both panels.

## **Board Sub-Group Updates**

### **8. CEO update**

JW presented a couple of aspects of his report including the positive place regarding capital funding, a Cardiff Met partnership and some time spent with Irish NGBs. JW also spoke on the Daily Mile being referenced in the recent Plaid Cymru manifesto.

JW also noted how well staff have performed in bringing Athletix to life getting the programme turned around in a year.

### **9. Finance Update**

Covered under 4 & 5.

### **10. Development & Participation**

TO reiterated JW's point on the great turnaround of the junior initiative. LM supported this point.

TO also updated that the sub-group are reviewing the TOR.

JW added that there is currently a review of the participation aspect of WA being undertaken. This included the positive number of responses that the Adults Running Survey has received so far.

### **11. General Council**

LB presented as chair of GC. This began with an update that WA staff will attend future general council meetings with specific themes to discuss. There were comments from other sub-groups regarding minutes taking a while to get to the website but the process to upload was clarified by LB.

The GC would like to have more input into the joint meeting in July.

### **12. UK Members Report**

LB updated the Board on the last UK members meeting including positive notes from President and Vice-President on the rising talent of young athletes. Concerns were raised including the lack of officials and the time taken to climb the official pathway, the lack of progress with the Power of 10, funding and age groups at SIAB.

LB also updated on the UKA fine regarding the hammer cage incident. PD asked if the WA position has been reviewed because of the outcome. JW answered that facility operators are requesting additional steps to be taken to protect this. The process Track Mark was reiterated as well as signposting to the industry standard approved providers for ongoing maintenance. A mandatory health and safety training aspect will also be brought in for officials and competition managers. PD asked for clarity on the maintenance on the equipment owned by WA or that WA are held responsible for. JW answered that WA have limited liability in regard to equipment due to not having specific implements offered out to competition providers. The liability would be sat with the competition provider. It was noted that a session should be held in a later board meeting surrounding Board liability and responsibility.

### **13. Performance**

Covered under 7.

**14. Sport Wales**

FB confirmed partner offer letters are due to come out 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026. Confirmation of new funding windows will be out on 8<sup>th</sup> April. FB also noted some new sector resilience projects happening, hoping to support some of the queries around staffing support.

**15. AOB**

SP told the Board that as well as a new chair there will be a new president so there will be an application process beginning for that which has been agreed by the awards and heritage group. The safeguarding report was read through and circulated to members.

**16. Date of next meeting**

27<sup>th</sup> May 2026