

Minutes of General Council Meeting 7 January 2026

Present:

Joyce Tomala (JT) – Vice Chairperson / East Wales

Kay Hatton (KH) – Chairperson North Wales

John Hatton (JH)

Sharon Leech (SL) – Road / Cross Country, WSAA

Christine Vorrés (CV)

Bernie Jones (BJ)

Steve Hames (SH) – Now representing West Wales.

James Williams

Lynette Harries

Joyce explained that she was taking the meeting as Vice Chair following the resignation of Lynne Brier – it's the last meeting before the AGM when a new chair may be elected.

1. Apologies for absence

Fred Malkin, Graham Finlayson, Arwel Lewis, Kyle Perry, Chris Pratt

2. Declaration of Interest

No declarations of interest declared.

3 Actions from previous meeting

Reinstatement of the fixtures calendars:

An initial meeting of the track and field has taken place to discuss the fixtures going forward. It was hoped to have another one at the end of August, but unfortunately the UK fixtures conference is not until 4th October, but we do have an outline for the Welsh T & F season.

James advised the members that a UK Wide Cross Country management group has been established for the off- track events and cross country to coordinate events and put some structure in place. The need for change has been recognised to ensure date/fixtures are announced as early as possible and clashes are avoided.

Inter-Regional Road Championships

At the last meeting it was mentioned that WA do not organise an interregional 10k champs. An update on this is that there have been communications between regional committees and Steward Harding and Christine Vorrés have agreed to source a suitable event, produce results and organise/award medals. The conversations are still at an early stage, but a request to find an event in mid-Wales has been made, but the events should be shared around the regions. James asked Christine to email Marcus at WA and arrange a meeting with him. ***AP – CV contact Marcus at WA.**

3. WA Matters for discussion

Joyce thanked James for agreeing to speak on all these items:

AGM

On October 24 of October (same day as the annual dinner) and will be a hybrid meeting as previous years - so in person and for those who can't attend there will be a virtual option. Currently no significant proposals or changes being put forward- except a notice from East Wales regarding eligibility.

i. Nominations for Chair of General Council

General Council doesn't have a permanent Chair following Lynne Brier's resignation, an advert has been sent out for nominations for this position along with president and vice president.

There is one nomination to date for president, but no nominations for vice president or Chair - the deadline for nominations is the tail end of this month. If no nominations are received, they can be taken from the floor at the AGM (and in the days leading up to the up to the AGM).

Joyce stressed that we do need to get the message across that nominations for these positions is vital. James also stated how important the role of Chair of GC is as they also sit on the board, with the role of facilitating the line of communication between board and Council.

James told the meeting that he is mindful that it is quite a big role and would be open for a discussion at some point, (once the new chair is in place) that if the new chair felt they didn't necessarily want to be the person to represent the Council on the board, then maybe general council could nominate somebody else to take on this element and share the burden.

Lynne was a fantastic chairperson, and she really was a strong advocate for council on the board and worked closely with the team.

Lynette said that it is regretful that we've lost Lynne but wanted to reinforce how important that link between the general council and the board is, but the fact that James is considering a Plan B is a step in the right direction.

ii. Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair of the Board

Nigel Walker has been elected as Chairman of the board; he has been on the board as vice chair for 12 months, so he has a good understanding of where the board is, and a good understanding where the sport is. At the AGM Steve perks will start the meeting and then hand over to Nigel

Following the interviewing process another board member was identified – Joni Alexander and she starts in September.

James gave the members a breakdown of Team Wales at the Commonwealth Games, and their successes also the European champs in Birmingham immediately after. He also noted that Sue Hooper was one of a number of officials who had officiated at the Games – James stated that television coverage was improved showing the popularity of the sport whilst some sports are losing exposure. This bodes well for the sport.

B. Consultation on the next Wales Athletics Strategy

The Games signals the end of the 4 year funding cycle so we are starting discussions with Sport Wales.

Over the next few months a member survey together with in person and virtual workshops will be undertaken for WA to get views of the members to help formulate the new strategy. The surveys will take place over the next 3 months.

Comments received by WA regarding the Official's pathway indicate that Officials may want to specialise in one aspect of a discipline – but the current progression pathway doesn't allow this. As WA now have ownership of Official's education they will pilot a piece of work that will enable people to essentially progress in their chosen discipline

James moved on to inform the members that they are exploring concepts and ideas to develop track and field competitions for over 20's and will be speaking to clubs. There is no domestic competition for u20' and above –

a webinar will be held on 30 Sept to see if this is wanted/needed. Joyce commented that there is very little for Seniors/Masters in respect of track and field. James said this is what they feel they should be addressing.

Finally, James stated that WA are working to develop a new learning management system for coach and officials' education is being developed, led by England Athletics. The mandatory training modules will be updated and a few other changes will be implemented. There may be a slight increase in costs to DBS.

There followed a brief discussion regarding grants for service providers to carry out repairs to facilities and the problems/delays that councils can cause. Joyce asked about the costs of facility providers, can WA influence the costs? James stated it is difficult and is looked at on a case by cases basis and is very frustrating. Most providers are always willing to have a conversation – and grants may be available to clubs to help with the costs.

Awards and Heritage Group

Joyce advised the meeting that there has been some confusion about who the members are on this panel, they had an e-mail from Chris this afternoon saying there are meetings scheduled for various panels but it's been terribly confusing – Lynette explained that she wrote to Steve Perks on behalf of the panel because there was a great deal of ambiguity which led to confusion as to the role of the panel and she thought that people became increasingly concerned as to who was doing what. Steve did reply but there were issues as to who was doing the final selection. The newly constituted groups should suggest a shortlist for the panel to make a selection.

James stated where there are gaps in expertise WA will plug that gap by having a panel full of experts so for example, in the social running aspects, if no one on the awards and heritage group feel they are “quote-unquote” ‘experts’ in that field – it would be good to build a sub-group of people that have that knowledge although it is going to be a challenge. It was debated whether the panel is needed if a sub-group of ‘experts’ is going to suggest a winner. Joyce thanked everyone for their contribution to this discussion

Track and Field Official

Joyce opened this topic by stating that there has been no representative from the official committee at track and field meetings for some time and members felt it is crucial for somebody to attend and feedback. Sue replied they don't have a track and field member on their committee.

AP- SH and JT to liaise on this.

Coach Database and Communication.

Joyce explained that sometimes an athlete would benefit from specific coaching, but they don't have access to contact details or a list of coaches to approach.

James replied that they cannot provide coach details – but if these are talented athletes the starting points would be the Performance Team.

Welsh schools

Joyce asked who is the Welsh Schools representative for schools track and field?

James confirmed that Welsh Athletics support our schools to deliver international events and national championships and have just had a successful SIAB event in Ireland and have the combined events coming up.

Sharon stressed the good work that volunteers have done in respect of the schools events but more people are needed to support their work.

Members discussed the workload teachers are coping with, and this could possibly be the reason that they are reluctant to engage with regional athletic committees.

Official's Courses

Sue explained that we haven't had any officials track and field courses for quite a while – she had an idea to send an e-mail out to the regions to see if the regions can touch base with their clubs to see if there is any interest, and if any club wants to put on a course she would take it back to James or the education department or whoever is going to be handling this to see what can be done about it.

5. Reports:

None submitted

6. AOB

Power of Ten

Kay asked if anybody's got an update on Power of Ten because at the last board meeting we all agreed that power of 10 was not up to scratch and still had a lot of work to be done. Joyce said it is better but it's not 100% yet.

AOB – Inter-Regional Endurance Events

Sharon asked about the discussions that have been taking place regarding an Inter-Regional 10k Event.

Christine has been contacted by a representative from the South, Stuart, with a view to reinstate this event. He has offered to do the results, but an appropriate licensed event needs to be found to host the race, Christine is helping to find a suitable event that is central to all regions, can accommodate all athletes. Kay suggested looking around mid-Wales.

AOB – Trinity Age Groups

Joyce told James that the Trinity reports are still showing the old age groups - James will raise that with UK Athletics

Minutes written by Christine Vorrés

24 September 2026

Dates of future meetings:

4th November

The meeting closed at 7.45pm.

Minutes written by Christine Vorrés