

# **Welsh Schools Athletics Association**

## **Management Committee Meeting**

**10am Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

### **1. Apologies & Present**

**Apologies:** Rhys Williams (WA Performance), James Williams (CEO Welsh Athletics), Chris Anthony (WA Head of Development)

**Present:** Steve Jones (WSAA Chair) SJ, Jo Warner (WSAA Immediate Past Chair) JW, Andrew Jenkins (WA) AJ, Euan Coney (WA Competitions Officer) EC, Gareth Oldham (WSAA Treasurer & Powys) GO, Gwilym Williams (WSAA President) GW, Steve Mitchell (WA National Talent Development Coordinator – Endurance) SM. Sharon Leech (WSAA Vice Chair) SL, Darran Williams (WA Competitions) DW and Alex Donald (WA Endurance Competitions Manager) AD.

### **2. Approval of minutes from previous meeting held 12/11/2025**

**2.1** Minutes approved by JW, seconded by GO.

### **3. Actions arising from previous meeting (12/11/2025)**

**3.1** Steve Jones has contacted Cardiff, Brecon and Aberdare tracks to establish availability and costings for our national championships as well as cup & plate finals in July 2026 with only one response to date.

**3.2** A working group is yet to be established to look at the different structures of the current districts and solutions to the challenges of volunteer personnel and financial sustainability of all eight districts. Initially terms of reference will be established, followed by invitations to individuals who can make a positive and constructive contribution to the working group.

**3.3** The combined events international saw a small team of 9 athletes travel rather than a potential full team of 16 athletes. The team size was due to athletes either being injured, unavailable or not having achieved the selection standard. A support team of 3 staff attended. All athletes performed very well throughout the day. Logistics for travel home breaking the journey with a few hours travel on the Saturday evening were well received.

**3.4** Cross Country school district trials are underway for pupils to progress to Welsh Schools at Brecon on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2026. Three have been held and five to

remain. DW will have course map, timetable and declaration sheets ready for distribution to district team managers this week.

**3.5** AJ will remind districts again of the track and field age group changes in the next schools mailshot, and will include the complete information guide on time tables on throws and hurdle specification changes from UKA and Home Countries. These changes will also be made available on the WSAA social media pages periodically leading up to the outdoor season.

#### **4. Fixtures**

##### **4.1 Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2026 Welsh Schools Cross Country Championships @ Brecon**

AD reconfirmed the facility is booked with school site manager and Freedom Leisure, First Aid, Risk Assessment in place, entry details, course map and timetable will be unchanged from 2025.

Age groups will be Year 7, Year 8&9 = U15 = Juniors, Years 10&11 = U17 = Middles and Years 12, 13 & 14 = Seniors.

Darran Williams will not be present for processing results as he will be on annual leave, Amy Edwards will lead processing of results on the day.

AJ school district provisional trial dates and venues for progressing to Brecon received to date are:

- South East Wales Wednesday 8th October 2025 at Risca School.
- North East Wales Thursday 4th December 2025 at Myddelton College.
- Glamorgan Valleys Monday 12th January 2026 at Newbridge Fields, Bridgend.
- Cardiff & The Vale Monday 12th January 2026 Girls at YG Bro Morgannwg
- Cardiff & The Vale Tuesday 13th January 2026 Boys at YG Bro Morgannwg
- Powys Wednesday 14th January 2026 at Dolerw Park, Newtown.
- Dyfed Tuesday 27th January 2026 at Haverfordwest Racecourse.
- Afan Nedd Tawe Wednesday 28th January 2026 at Margam Park.
- Eryri Thursday 5th February 2026 at Treborth Athletics Track, Bangor

##### **4.2 Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2026 SAB U15 & U17 Cross Country International @ Faenol Estate North Wales**

AD reconfirmed the Faenol Estate will be the race venue with all teams able to be accommodated at the Conwy Centre at a cost of £56pp which included dinner, breakfast and a packed lunch. SIAB delegates will be accommodated at a nearby hotel. A provisional course map and timetable have been compiled. A formal invite along with the event plan will be sent to the other Nations in mid-January 2026. Amy Edwards WA North Wales Competition Officer will be supporting event delivery. Additional races will be incorporated into the program; these will be two open races for primary school aged

children before the main SIAB races. The event will now also incorporate the British Masters Individual Cross Country Championships with two races one for Men and one for Women following the completion of the SIAB races. AD is looking for volunteers to fulfil various roles at the International for course set up, marshalling, course take down and attaches for the international teams over the Friday and Saturday.

AJ&SJ to check with Zane Maynard (Morriston Comprehensive) team mangers in place.

#### **4.3 Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2026 Welsh Sportshall Athletics Final @ Cwmbran**

Sportshall Athletics were contacted back in November 2025 to see if the Welsh Final could be rescheduled to avoid the clash with the SIAB cross country international in North Wales. Unfortunately, they were unable to accommodate us. Whilst it is unlikely to affect any athletes it does effect team mangers and volunteers availability for both. Therefore, we are anticipating three of the eight districts fielding teams this year. We will undertake a review of the SportsHall program for 2027 to see how we can work together to reinvigorate and get greater participation from all eight school districts.

AJ Sports Hall district fixtures received to date are:

- Cardiff & the Vale

Wednesday 28th January 2026 U15 girls (years 9 & 10) at Ysgol Glantaf (start 3.30 pm)

Thursday 29th January 2026 U15 boys (years 9 & 10) at Ysgol Glantaf (start 3.30 pm)

Wednesday 4th February 2026 U13 girls (years 7 & 8) at Whitchurch Lower (start 3.30 pm)

Thursday 5th February 2026 U13 boys (years 7 & 8) at Whitchurch Lower (start 3.30 pm)

- Dyfed U13 Thursday 29th January 2026 at Pentre Awal Leisure Centre.
- Dyfed U15 Tuesday 21st October 2025 at Pentre Awal Leisure Centre.
- Powys Wednesday 21st January 2026 at Maldwyn Leisure Centre, Newtown.
- Eryri at TBC.
- North East Wales at TBC.
- South East Wales at TBC.
- Afan Nedd Tawe TBC.
- Glamorgan Valleys at TBC.

#### **4.4 Saturday 4th July 2026 for the U14 U16 & U18 Track & Field championships @ Aberdare**

Following the discussions in matters arising it was decided with time pressing, we will duplicate the venues for 2025 and go again with Aberdare as the venue for the track and field championships. It will be a full event program with three age groups across U14,

U16 & U18. For 2026 there will be no additional entry standards for U14, U16 or U18 due to the age group changes, and the challenge of accommodating three age groups in across a full event program. All track races will be time trials rather than heats and finals. Euan Coney will book the venue and first aid.

#### **4.5 Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2026 U14 & U16 Cup & Plate Finals @ Brecon**

Following discussions in matters arising and with time pressing it was decided we will duplicate the venues for 2025 and go again with Brecon as the venue for the track and field Cup & Plate Finals. The event format will be the same as last year. Steve Jones will book the venue and first aid.

#### **4.6 Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2026 SIAB International @ Belfast**

We are awaiting confirmation on what age groups will be included in the Schools International but suspect it will be U17. This causes challenges in selection policy with Welsh Schools using even age groups, English Schools using odd age groups until 1<sup>st</sup> September 2026 , Scottish Schools using 1<sup>st</sup> January 2 year age groups. SM will look at making changes to the selection policy used in the last few years of how best we can select a team for 2026. BD will look at travel logistics, which are likely to be the same as 2022 with buses to Holyhead, Ferry to Dublin and buses to Belfast.

#### **4.7 Joint Welsh Schools & Welsh Athletics U14 U16 & U18 Combined Events Championships**

For 2026 we will look at a September date outside of the school holidays to encourage a larger entry, likely to be on the weekend of 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> September. Euan Coney will look at potential venues. A limited number of additional open events for individuals may be incorporated into the day to make it more financially viable to help cover associated competition delivery costs.

### **5. 2026 Age Group Changes Update**

The age group change is a rule change for the sport in the UK, from odd to even age groups commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026. This is not a policy change by Welsh Athletics, or an initiative, it is a formal UK Athletics rule change. The rules are updated on an annual basis and formally updated every two years. The rules are to be under-pinned by the competition license applications and the subsequent insurance. There have been several opportunities to engage with this process over the past 2 years, Welsh Athletics have held multiple webinars and always been available to discuss any specific queries. AJ School district contacts were all emailed again to reconfirm these rule change prior to the Christmas Holidays.

### **6. Teachers Education & Initiatives.**

A Secondary Teachers Run Jump Throw Workshop has been confirmed and been advertised for Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at Hawarden High School, Deeside, we are very grateful to the school for allowing us to host a workshop midweek.

Three Primary Teachers Run Jump Throw Workshops with Coleg Cambria at the Deeside and Yale campuses are scheduled for Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> February, 25<sup>th</sup> February and 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

A Primary Teachers Run Jump Throw Workshop with Carmarthenshire County Council is scheduled for Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026 at the brand new Canoflan Pentre Awel Leisure Centre.

A budget request for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 financial year is being considered for 3 project areas. First, additional budget to run up to additional discounted teachers education workshops annually, consisting of a blend of Primary and Secondary Workshops. Secondly, the reintroduction of schools to clubs grassroots coaching days for clubs that wish to engage that will have exit routes to clubs available for the events to be delivered, bespoke to each club of which events, schools and pupils they wish to target. Third, as mentioned in competitions above, of how to get engagement across all eight school districts with sports hall athletica and what competition pathway and format would best suit this. Whilst all eight districts engage with cross country, track & field championships and track & field cup fixtures, this does not happen with SportsHall Athletics.

## **7. AOB including date of next meeting**

**7.1** Date of next meeting 10am Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

**7.2** EC will be leaving Welsh Athletics in the next few weeks to take up a new competition role with British Athletics. SJ gave congratulations on behalf of everyone present and thanked Euan for his invaluable and professional support of WSAA events whilst he has been in post.

### **7.3 Association Awards**

Recipients of our award winners covering the whole academic year were decided under AOB as circumstances did not allow in the December 2025 AGM. SJ will place an order for all awards with Direct Source and arrange to distribute and present them as early as possible. EC confirmed the invoice will go to WA competitions department.

#### Awards List:

WSAA July Track & Field Championships Awards were decided prior to the AGM:

- Best Male Field Performance
- Best Male Track Performance
- Best Female Field Performance
- Best Female Track Performance
- Best Middle Distance Performance (Boy or Girl)
- Best Hurdles Performance (Boy or Girl)

Association Awards to be decided under AOB in the management meeting:

- JDB Williams award for the outstanding field performance by a boy or girl
- Jack O'Connell Award for the outstanding track performance by a boy or girl
- Rae Evans award for the outstanding girls cross country performance
- Denys Gumbley award for the outstanding boys cross country performance

**7.4** GW Thanked all WA staff and WSAA Volunteers in attendance and those not present for their continued support of all aspects of schools athletics in Wales.

Meeting closed at 10.56am.