

Welsh Athletics Board and General Council Meeting

Minutes

19th July 2023

Meeting held remotely via video link and in person

Present: James Williams, Steve Perks, Hannah Pretty, Paul Brooks, Rob Campion, Jamie Clode, John Hatton, Helen Adams, Dan Clements, Christine Vorres, Kyle Perry, Eleanor Cartlidge, Sharon Leech, Lorna Kerr, Joyce Tomala, Lynette Harries, Nick Everitt, Chris Type

Apologies for Absence: Tom Overton, Kay Hatton, Jonathan Ford

Declaration of Interest

None declared

Discussion items

Welsh Athletics Update

1. Staffing re-structure

JW presents new development and participation structure with roles focusing on increasing participation and representation in sport.

2. Sport Wales

JW presents SW lottery growth removal as well as plans to recruit PhD students as part of the performance department.

3. Inflation

The impacts of inflation such as the increasing costs of delivering events as well as the Impact on staff wellbeing is also presented.

4. Positive trends and looking ahead

The group discuss positive trends including; records being broken - Jeremiah Azu and Melissa Courtney as well as 17 medals at SIAB and great results in World Para Championships, highest entry rate to Senior/U15 Champs as well as seeing positive returns in race licencing, events and participants.

JW presents the Coach & Officials Education transfer which will help to tackle shortages with officials and the ability to respond to the coach and officials community.

New direct delivery to Starting Blocs presented with new providers coming onstream, an investment in facilities etc and strategy development.

5. UKA

JW presents a knock-on effect of challenges UKA faces including a Safeguarding contribution.

Considerations, challenges and opportunities

The ability to cover costs and challenges is limited so some potential changes are considered.

Affiliation fees are discussed for ideas to keep up with increasing costs.

WA strategy review presented.

Age Group Proposal

1. JW presents on the UKA/HCAF proposal to change the junior age groups for track & field athletics, some reasons being the increased dropout rates as well as aligning with most other countries around the world.
2. Key reasons for change are presented to avoid the clash of exam pressure avoiding age groups being split over primary/secondary and have better alignment with the talent pathway. This would mean the introduction of U12 age group.
3. How this would be implemented is then discussed. This would include a longer-term phased approach with **full** change not being implemented till 2026 Jan-Dec.

Questions

- The junior athlete voice will be looked at with the new Young Person role at Run Wales
- The U12 age group could start from any age to bring fun into competitions as well
- Clubs should start talking about localised events for those who are younger and don't have access to facilities/comps
- The group discuss the struggle of getting young people to aspire to be athletes

AOB.

- GF discussed the possibility of merging the two Awards panels.
- JW mentioned that this was presented last year, but the President and Vice Presidents rejected it at the time. Further discussions need to take place to explore the options before a proposal is put forward to the AGM
- Action – SP, GF & Clive Williams to meet to discuss next steps.

Date of Next Meeting

Note – minutes from previous meetings should be circulated and agreed electronically.