



Welsh Athletics Track and Field Committee

Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday 9th February 2022.

Present

Joyce Tomala (JT), Lynne Brier (LB), Lynette Harries (LH), Jen Stone (JS), Bethan Akanbi-Mortimer, Darran Williams (DH), Crispin Backsall (CB), Sue Hooper (SH), Jake Morgan (JM), Adrian Palmer (AP), Bethan Davies (BD), Seriashe Childs (SC)

1. APOLOGIES

Rhiannon Linington-Payne (RLP), Kath Elias, Jen Stone, Crispin Backsall

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest.

3. WELSH ATHLETICS COMPETITION UPDATE (RLP)

AP provided feedback on the DNA event held in Glasgow. It was a successful event for Welsh athletes with some good performances and a great sense of team spirit. Some athletes had to be drafted in at the last minute because of athlete withdrawals. It was very different to all other competitions that Welsh athletes have competed in, but an overall successful event.

JM agreed with AP and confirmed that he had enjoyed watching it.

JT congratulated all athletes and team managers concerned.

AP informed the committee that there was also to be an outdoor version of the event.

JT read out an update from RLP which contained the following information:

- Drop off in Under 13 age group was concerning at the indoor championships, especially with boys.
- Under 15 boys numbers also very low.
- Athlete numbers in indoor championships lower than 2020.
- Junior League – no changes to dates currently. No progress yet on this as performance team been concentrating on indoors. The focus will now return to outdoor competitions and junior league.

JT said that clubs were becoming more and more concerned about what was going to happen with the junior league.

JM suggested that the drop off in numbers at lower age groups could possibly be because the athletes were not ready for competition because they have not had the

experience of early age group competitions and much of the foundation work has not been done.

AP suggested that clubs be asked why they think that there is a decrease in numbers of boys taking part in athletics.

4. PERFORMANCE UPDATE

a. Commonwealth Games Update

AP shared the following information:

- the team has to be nominated by 8th May
- The message is still clear from Sport Wales that this will be a small team.
- Rhys Williams is supporting the relay team and working hard to find competitions for them in America.
- There will be athletes who achieve the standard but won't end up going.
- Accommodation is proving to be difficult in Birmingham and forever changing.
- Wales will be accommodated in Birmingham University, with some team managers in Walsall.
- Welsh Athletics will be eligible for three / four coach passes. They are trying to get these coaching passes transferable so that more personal coaches may use them.
- The Vale Hotel is to be the holding camp from 25th July. Marathon athletes will travel to Birmingham on 27th July and then the second cohort will travel up on 30th July.
- Welsh Athletics will not be attending the opening ceremony to protect the athletes from Covid.
- Relays still being discussed at UKA level.
- Anyone on long list will be offered some support to get them to the Commonwealth Games.

JT reminded the committee that it is not Welsh Athletics that select the team.

SC said that many athletes still thought that it was Welsh Athletics who selected the team for the Commonwealth Games and felt that Welsh Athletics should make it clearer that this is not the case in order to maintain a good relationship between Welsh Athletics and the athletes.

AP said that this has been made clear to athletes on numerous occasions but agreed that it would be announced again as a reminder.

b. International Competition

AP confirmed the following:

- Manchester International will not be going ahead.
- Welsh Under 20 International will be going ahead as usual.

- Loughborough International will take place in May.
- UK School Games will go ahead but it is not yet confirmed that athletics will be in it.

JT asked if there will be other international opportunities for athletes.

AP said that there was to be some provision for long list athletes e.g. the endurance group will be going to America, the relay teams will be competing in Florida and the throwers will be going to Turkey. However, there are currently no other competitions planned yet. AP confirmed that there were meetings pending to discuss this.

JM asked if there would be any competition opportunities planned for junior athletes aiming for GB junior selection.

AP said that they would normally look for competitions for athletes who were on the cusp of being selected for GB teams. He said that they were aware of a GB Under 18 team going to Israel to compete this year.

5. DISCUSSION / ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

a. Appointment of Track and Field Team Managers

JT reminded the committee that it is the role of this committee to appoint track and field team managers and that this is in the by-laws. JT expressed concern that this has not happened in recent years.

BD said that she had been working with Zoe Holloway to compile a list of team managers across the disciplines but would also need staff members to be present on overseas trips to support and protect athletes and volunteers.

JM said that he was not clear about the job description of a team manager and pointed out that a different skill set was required to manage different age groups. JM agreed with BD that a Welsh Athletics staff member would be required to support team managers. JM said that he would welcome some training and information on job descriptions for team managers. JM reiterated that there needs to be a specific skill set to match each individual competition and different age groups.

BD and AP said that it was important that everyone worked together and trained people appropriately.

LB confirmed that some individuals have asked to be team managers and not even had a reply from Welsh Athletics.

AP asked how we should approach the Loughborough International with regard to appointing team managers.

JT said that we need names of potential team managers before the Loughborough International so that the committee can select appropriately.

JM suggested that team manager selections take place at the same time as athlete selections, with nominated members of the track and field committee present in the selection meetings.

BD said that she would create an expression of interest form that can be shared as widely as possible on the website, social media and within all committees.

AP said that they would put a basic job description with the expression of interest form.

b. Medallists at Track and Field Championships

A lengthy discussion took place about how medals should be awarded at future Under 20 and Senior Welsh Championships. The following options were discussed:

1. First three Welsh athletes to be awarded with medals and overall first three athletes to receive medals, irrespective of their nationality.
2. First three Welsh athletes and overall winner, if not Welsh, to be awarded a medal.
3. First three athletes only to be awarded medals, irrespective of their nationality.

The athlete representatives felt strongly that the first three Welsh athletes should always be awarded medals, irrelevant of the position that they finish in the competition.

DW started the discussion by expressing his opinion that the first three athletes should be awarded medals, irrespective of their nationality.

JM felt that two sets of medals should be awarded, one set for Welsh athletes and another for first three overall competitors. JM expressed his opinion that the inclusion of non-Welsh athletes would always raise the quality of the competition and therefore attract more Welsh athletes as well. AW supported this viewpoint.

SH agreed that Welsh athletes should always be rewarded for competing at Welsh Championships and felt that two sets of medals should be awarded i.e. first three Welsh athletes and first three overall competitors.

LB supported first three Welsh athletes being awarded medals, irrespective of their position at the end of the competition, in an effort to maintain the “Welshness” of the competition and encourage Welsh athletes to participate.

LH felt that Welsh athletes must always be protected at Welsh Championships.

It was ultimately decided that the overall first three positions will be awarded medals, as well as the top three Welsh athletes. The Welsh medals will represent Welsh Championships and the overall top three competitors will represent the open element of the competition, if non-Welsh.

The cost of medals was discussed and DW confirmed that the competition entry fee may have to be raised to cover the cost of extra medals.

Action: RLP to provide the committee with medal costs by the next meeting

6. REPORTS

a. Regional Issues

South Wales and East Wales:

JT confirmed that the two regions would hold their Inter-regional Championships on 14th May in Aberdare.

West Wales:

West Wales are to hold their Inter-regional competition on Sunday 15th May. No venue has yet been agreed upon.

North Wales:

DW said that North Wales were likely to hold their Inter-regional competition on Saturday 14th May.

b. Officials Committee

SH shared the following:

- Availability form for outdoor competitions will be ready for distribution at the end of the indoor season.
- Back-to-back indoor competitions had been quite difficult and challenging for officials and thanked all those who volunteered.
- The Officials Conference is to take place on 6th March at the Vale Hotel and welcomed any suggestions from the committee on what could be included.
- Four Welsh officials have been selected for the Commonwealth Games:
Sue Maughan
Becky Gibbs
Amy Price
Sue Hooper

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

LB asked AC about the Under 17 boys breaking the record at SIAB in Derby. AC will look into this.

LB also asked about the possibility of a Swansea athlete by the name of Matilda Quick breaking a shotput record.

BD asked if the committee if race-walking could be considered in track and field meetings.

JT said that they tended to communicate with Martin Bell and had discussed looking at an open meeting for walks. JT was not sure if they would be included in league matches. JT said that BD was welcome to attend track and field meetings.

AP said that walks were included in age group championship matches and therefore we should include walks in future track and field agendas.

JT said that a facilities update needed to be added to the next agenda, especially to find out what was happening with throws in Newport and pole vault in Aberdare.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 6th April 2022

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 6th April

Wednesday 8th June

Wednesday 3rd August

Wednesday 12th October

Wednesday 7th December

The meeting ended at 7:30pm.