

**UKA Members Meeting**  
**Friday 12 March 2021**  
**via Teams Call**

**Present** Jason Gardener – President  
Stef Reid – Vice President  
Myra Nimmo – England Athletics Chair  
Ian Beattie – Scottish Athletics Chair  
David Abrahams – Athletics Northern Ireland representative  
Steve Perks – Welsh Athletics Chair  
Julian Starkey – England Clubs Representative  
Toni Minichiello – Coaches representative  
Arwel Williams – Officials representative  
Roland Gibbard – Road Runners Representative  
Hannah England – Chair of the Athletes Commission

**In attendance** Nic Coward – UK Athletics Interim Chair  
Joanna Coates – UK Athletics Chief Executive Officer  
Penny Avis – UK Athletics Board Member (SID)  
Mark Draisey – UK Athletics Chief Financial Officer  
Helen Wyeth – Minutes

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

It was noted that Hannah England, Steve Perks and David Abrahams may need to leave the meeting at various points due to prior commitments. Julian Starkey joined at agenda item 2.

**2. Minutes of the previous meetings and actions**

*Members meeting 23 October 2020*

It was noted that Toni Minichiello is the coaches representative (not coaching)  
6 – paragraph 2 to be replaced in line with the exact wording contained with the Dame Sue Street report  
10.2 – to be amended to read ‘stay’ on futures  
8 – Officials, record to be amended to read a European Best and UKA 800m record.

Subject to the above amendments the minutes were approved.

*Members meeting 18 November 2020*

Noted that Toni Minichiello is the coaches representative (not coaching)

Subject to the above amendment the minutes were approved.

*Annual General Meeting 11 December 2020*

Julian Starkey joined the call

Noted that Toni Minichiello is the coaches representative (not coaching)

There were no further questions on the minutes which had been previously circulated. Formal approval will be at the 2021 AGM.

#### Actions from the AGM

Page 1, point B, relating to circulation of the Company accounts prior to filing. PA confirmed the timetable as: September final audit, October UKA Board approval and accounts filed, December accounts presented at the AGM.

Page 2, point 1. It was confirmed that the position stated in the minutes regarding staff redundancies remains unchanged in that no further information can be shared.

It was noted that the minutes from the UK Member meeting following the AGM will be circulated with the minutes of this meeting.

### **3. President's update**

The recent European Indoor Championships at which the GB and NI Team competed was agreed as a positive and much welcome step forward amidst the current pandemic.

It was noted that a letter had been received from the Association of Athletics Leagues which included negative comments on the consultation process. The Leagues were considered a very important part of the sport.

### **4. Vice Presidents update**

The performance staff were praised for the work they had (around the European Indoor Championships) and still are undertaking to implement covid policies to ensure athletes can train and compete in as covid secure environment as possible.

Concern was expressed around the levels of disquiet in the sport. This was particularly around the difference in views regarding the provision of competition levels expected by athletes in the UK from UKA itself.

It was noted that the current uncertainty in the sport at many levels and therefore the consequent rumours, also leads to discomfort in the (performance) staff which leading up to Tokyo could have a negative impact.

Confusion over the roles of the HCAFs and UKA by the athletics community was raised. It was acknowledged that there is currently work ongoing regarding long term strategies, it was felt that a short-term focus on communications and the competition pathway from grassroots to elite was necessary.

Good communication was again cited as being critical and a debate took place around the different communication process in place and expectations. The communication protocols and processes around the consultation process were discussed, the need for UKA Members to feel and be actively involved, alongside the desire for the HCAFs to manage their own consultations within their home country.

UKA Members were reminded that they had authorised the HCAFs to go away and work on their own consultation processes and that the UKA Members had had the opportunity to engage before circulation.

It was confirmed that England Athletics had presented their consultation proposals to their National Council first and then to the UKA Members for comments. Following feedback, the consultation had been delayed allowing comments to be taken on board and amendments to be made. The consultation process was also extended from three to five weeks. England Athletics hoped the UKA Members did not feel disregarded.

It was confirmed that Grace Hall (AAL) had been in positive discussions with England Athletics and had signed up to a webinar.

It was noted that some UKA Members felt that there were confused messages coming out of the competitions group and the lack of staff continuity in that area may not have helped.

Scottish Athletics expressed dissatisfaction that documents had been circulated to Scottish clubs directly and not via Scottish Athletics.

## 5. UKA Update

A slide presentation was made covering the following key areas with the additional points below noted:

- a. Governance
  - i. The Strategy and Operations Director has now been appointed to the Executive team and the operational plan is scheduled to be rolled out over the same weekend as the Diamond League and the English Schools Championships.
  - ii. Following a debate on the casual vacancy for a club elected member and if this should be restricted to Celtic clubs only, a motion was put forward by Toni Minichiello and seconded by Arwel Williams that this position could be filled by any club representative (not just a Celtic club) as an interim position from now up to the point of the AGM. The motion was passed. It was requested that Mark Draisey issue a notice to the clubs. **ACTION MD**
  - iii. It was also agreed that the President would write to Ed Warner to confirm if he wished to sit in on or receive paperwork from the UKA Members meeting as Vice Chair of the IPC Para Committee. It was also agreed that the President would contact the World Athletics to confirm if Cherry Alexander as Vice President of European Athletics is a member of the IAAF Council and therefore should also be invited to attend the UKA Members meetings or receive paperwork if she wished. **ACTION JG**
  - iv. It was confirmed that the full executive team is now in place and that current/past employees were offered the opportunity to apply.
  - v. Concern was expressed over the timeline and the process for the appointment of the Chair (Advert open in July, to close early September followed by interviews and announcement in October). It was confirmed that the appointment process was a UKA Board led process but that UKA Members will be communicated with and be part of the process. The UKA Members were

reminded that under the framework agreement the HCAFs represent four of the five equal parts of the UKA Board and as such are fully involved in the process and will be represented on the appointments panel. It was confirmed that the appointments panel is chaired by the Senior Independent Director (SID) and that the appointments panel will be looking for a Chair not only to Chair the Board but also to inspire confidence in the sport. It was requested that more detail on the appointment process is shared with the UKA Members to enable them to act in their capacity as sounding board. The UKA Members were asked to have a forward-thinking approach based in the framework agreement and do not perpetuate the historical environment of mistrust between UKA and HCAFs.

**ACTION: PA**

b. Development

- i. Discussions over the size of permitted advertising (kit) continue especially compared to other sports. Being picked up at World Athletics level. **ACTION JC**
- ii. Collaborative working groups are ongoing between UKA and HCAFs regarding rules under review (deadline August).
- iii. It was confirmed that off-track/endurance will be a sub working group within development.
- iv. Composition of the working groups will be settled by the end of April and individuals contacted.

c. Competition

- i. It was confirmed that Grace Hall (AAL) is part of the review of competition currently taking place.
- ii. JS declared his interest as a member of the YDL Committee with Grace Hall.
- iii. The geography of the county was noted as an issue for some leagues. It was also noted that some leagues are not part of the AAL.
- iv. It was noted that there have been many competition reviews in the past (2015 the latest) but the current team would prefer not to look back on past recommendations and learnings but as a new team wished to build up their own recommendations.
- v. Concern was expressed over the desire for and management of change with over 40+ track and field leagues. The Executive team considers the challenge a longer-term project of 1-3 years and that it is ultimately their job responsibility to make change happen.
- vi. UKA confirmed they are responsible for the delivery of major events whilst the rest of the competition structure is delivered by competition providers.
- vii. Alongside the UKA performance programme, relevant level competition to enable great performances and points was considered essential. It was felt that the impact of Covid had highlighted how much GB and NI rely on other countries to deliver competition opportunities, especially as UKA Championships favour senior championship athletes and not the Paris stream.
- viii. It was noted there was also not an UK IPC Grand Prix and that competition for para-athletes was lacking. This can have a big impact on seeding and starting grid position for athletes such as wheelchair racers. It was confirmed that in a recent workgroup the above points had been noted and discussed.

- ix. It was confirmed that there will be four key events in 2021 including one Diamond League. It was confirmed the date of the Diamond League was based on the best possible available TV option.
- d. Performance
  - i. It was confirmed that the UK Sport 'core' funding had been reduced leading to a restructure in the back-room team which is less than ideal pre-Tokyo.
  - ii. It was confirmed that only essential performance team members will travel to Tokyo (not the CEO or Chair)
  - iii. It was confirmed that the athlete experience will be significantly different in Tokyo with only essential time in the village etc.
  - iv. The GB and NI team performance at the European Indoors was noted alongside some excellent media interviews.
  - v. It was confirmed there is still a performance role for field events to be announced/advertised.
  - vi. It was confirmed that although the new short sprints and relays and long sprints and relays appointments do not hold current coaching qualifications the roles are based more around relationships between the athlete coach pairings and that the new appointments (Darren Campbell and Tim Benjamin) will not coach individuals.
- e. Commercial
  - i. It was confirmed the commercial team is fully functional and that conversations continue. Propositions that include both grassroots to elite are appealing to brands.
  - ii. It was confirmed that all current commercial partners remain extremely supportive.
- f. Finance (Mark Draisey)
  - i. It was confirmed that the end of year position remains on track
  - ii. It was confirmed that the 2021 budget will be presented to the UKA Board in two weeks' time.
  - iii. Congratulations were noted for the whole UKA team for their cost control in- especially considering the difficult year and the loss of major events.

## **6. Home Country Report**

- a. England Athletics
  - i. 34 consultation responses received so far.
  - ii. 36 signed up for the webinar.
  - iii. 1 letter received and sent onto the UKA Members
- b. Scottish Athletics
  - i. Colin Hutchison appointed as the new CEO.
  - ii. Ian Beattie to step down as Chair in early September

## **7. Volunteer Reports**

- a. Road Running
  - i. Pleased to receive clarity that off track will now be included in the competition's subgroup.
  - ii. Currently bombarded with race organisers questions regarding the possible 'open' date for future road running events – is it 29 March? England Athletics

confirmed they are in contact with DCMS but are also waiting on advice on 29 March.

- iii. Scottish Athletics confirmed as of today date they can meet in small groups of up to 15 adults with risk protocols in place.
  - b. Officials
    - i. Concern was expressed over the possible loss of officials due to lockdown/new hobbies etc. It was confirmed that an audit of officials and coaches will be part of the operational plan.
  - c. England Clubs
    - i. It was noted that many clubs wish to return to appropriate training but that in many cases venue providers are delaying this until 12 April.
    - ii. There is currently pressure on clubs from leagues to host competitions but without venue provider support and official's availability known clubs are finding it difficult to commit.
  - d. Coaches
    - i. The lack of qualification standards for the World Juniors, European Juniors and European Under 23s was raised as an issue. A request was made that standards are released even if the full selection policy is not.
    - ii. It was noted with pleasure that the Head of Coaching and Development advert has now been released.
    - iii. A request was made to advertise the jumps as combined events role as soon as possible as this was felt critically important.
8. Any Other Business
- a. It was confirmed that HCAFs nominees sitting on the UKA Board have 'no conflict'.
  - b. Concern was raised over the need for U18 Competition that ensures athletes still can make the qualifications required for university scholarships.
  - c. A question was raised in relation to the European Under 18 Championships in September and if this will take place? **ACTION: JC to revert back**
  - d. It was confirmed that UKA/Performance are doing all they can to help athletes reach their potential at the Olympics /Paralympics in Tokyo under the current circumstances.
  - e. Concern was raised over the opportunity for athletes to meet the BOA points / ranking scores required to make team selection. It was reiterated that the team is doing all it can to ensure this happens in covid times.
  - f. It was confirmed that progress had been made on the recommendations of the Dame Sue Street report regarding communication. Social media was highlighted, but that communication in general will be a big focus within the operational plan.
  - g. AAL letter. It was confirmed that the AAL are not a formal member of any HCAF, but they are a competition provider / enabler. It was confirmed that the members of the AAL are the Clubs and that it is the Clubs who are the HCAF members. As such the AAL should not have any specific direct line of communication or particular authority but in line with the framework agreement (public document) the AAL members (the clubs) are the members with whom consultation should take place. It was however noted that the AAL (or any league) should be engaged with over competition matters solely.

END

### Summary of Actions

Point	ACTION	Responsible
5a.ii	Following a debate on the casual vacancy for a club elected member and if this should be restricted to Celtic clubs only, a motion was put forward by Toni Minichiello and seconded by Arwel Williams that this position could be filled by any club representative (not just a Celtic club) as an interim position from now up to the point of the AGM. The motion was passed. It was requested that Mark Draisey issue a notice to the clubs. <b>ACTION MD</b>	<b>ACTION MD</b>
5a.iii	It was agreed that the President would write to Ed Warner to confirm if he wished to sit in on or receive paperwork from the UKA Members meeting as Vice Chair of the IPC Para Committee. It was also agreed that the President would contact the World Athletics to confirm if Cherry Alexander as Vice President of European Athletics is a member of the IAAF Council and therefore should also be invited to attend the UKA Members meetings or receive paperwork if she wished. <b>ACTION JG</b>	<b>ACTION JG</b>
5a. v	It was requested that more detail on the appointment process of the Chair is shared with the UKA Members to enable them to act in their capacity as sounding board.	<b>ACTION PA</b>
8c	A question was raised in relation to the European Under 18 Championships in September and if this will take place?	<b>ACTION: JC to revert back</b>