

UKA Members Meeting
Friday 24 June 2022 – 13:30
Etihad Stadium, Manchester

Present: Jason Gardener – President (Chair)
Stefanie Reid – Vice President
David Abrahams – Athletics Northern Ireland Chair
Grace Hall – Clubs Elected Representative
Julian Starkey – Clubs Elected Representative
Arwel Williams – Officials Representative
Roland Gibbard – Road Running Representative
Ronald Morrison – Scottish Athletics President

In Attendance Ian Beattie – UKA Chair
Mark Munro – Interim UKA Chief Executive
Mark Draisey – UKA Chief Financial Officer and Company Secretary
Chris Jones – England Athletics CEO representing Gary Shaughnessy
Cherry Alexander – Strategic Lead for Major Events & International Relations
Chris Moss – Interim Development Director
Tommy Yule – Head of Performance
Corrie Pope – Executive PA (Notetaker)

Apologies Mike Leonard – Senior Coaches Representative
Steve Perks – Welsh Athletics Chair
Gary Shaughnessy – England Athletics Chair
Andrew Heyes – Chair of the Athletes Commission

Welcome and Apologies

The President welcomed those attending the meeting. Apologies were received from ML, SP, GS, AH

This would be DA's last members meeting and the Chair thanked him for his contribution during their tenure. It was noted that Paul Lawther would be replacing them.

1. Minutes of the previous meetings and actions

Members meeting 25 February 2022

The minutes of the meeting and been previously circulated for comment and were duly approved.

Matters arising – none raised.

The minutes of the meeting were duly approved.

Update on Actions:

- 1 Ongoing dialogue with World Athletics (WA) regarding the logo size on athlete vests. UKA had sent a communication to WA and had not received a response. Action to remain open.
- 2 Concerns raised at the lack of diversity within the commercial working group members. It was reported appointments were based on the role they do in their respective countries. Action Closed.
- 5 Feedback on board and nomination process for officials at events. It was reported that the process would be reviewed. Work is ongoing action will be kept open.
- 7 Update on make up and status of working groups. Update to be provided as part of the meeting. Action Closed.

2. President's update

The President acknowledged and thanked the host for the forthcoming UK Championships, wishing the athletes, organising team, staff and officials all the best for the championship. The President offered his congratulations on the career of Stefanie who had recently announced her retirement from athletics.

3. Vice Presidents update

The Vice-President acknowledged the buzz generated by the athletes for the forthcoming competition. Recognising this was an opportunity to win medals and an opportunity for athletes to achieve selection for forthcoming Championships.

It was raised that Members would like more time to review papers for future meetings. For items that are updates or for non decision, papers would not always be produced. This was noted and future discussion will be held with the President to agree timelines. **Action IB/MD**

4. UKA Chair Update

4.1 UK Sport

The Chair provided an update on the overall relationship between UKA and UK Sport, reporting frequent meetings and open communication between them. Relationships were positive and UK Sport are encouraged by the direction of travel UKA is taking.

UKA have been subject to Finance and Governance Audits. The Finance audit was completed and a rating of meeting standards was obtained all parties are satisfied with the outcome. The draft report of the Governance Audit has been received and has raised a number of recommendations which will be addressed. MM will take the lead on the action plan to address these recommendations.

4.2 World Athletics engagement update

The Chair, working in partnership with the interim CEO have been building relationships with both World and European Athletics to improve relationships between UKA and external organisations. Both CEO's from WA and EA attended the Diamond League in Birmingham.

The recent award of World Indoor Championships to Glasgow in 2024 was warmly welcomed.

5. UKA CEO and CFO Update

The interim CEO and CFO plus other members of the UKA executive management team provided an overview presentation to the Members on current operational activity. The key areas covered were:

- Overall UKA Priorities
- Safeguarding
- Events
- Development (including working groups)
- Transgender
- Governance
- Finance

5.1 UKA Priorities

MM outlined the current key priorities for UKA within the UKA business plan and the process for how these would be communicated publicly in the future. MM also re-emphasised the roles and responsibilities between UKA and the HCAFs.

5.2 Safeguarding

MM provided an overview of delivery structures and case numbers was provided. The increase in online/social media bullying cases was noted, not just with UKA but across the HCAFs as well.

MM advised that the time taken to complete non-complex cases is averaging 8 weeks with the time taken to complete complex cases averaging 17 weeks. He also noted that several cases are particularly complex, particularly those with a high number of complainants and witnesses. MM outlined the investigation process, with an example provided on one case involving 40 witnesses. These can take around a year to complete, particularly where police investigations also involved.

MM also reported that UKA have introduced a new system to fast track lower threshold (non-safeguarding) disciplinary cases to enable quicker decision making.

A question was asked if anyone was reviewing historic cases. It was reported that these are being reviewed by a dedicated member of staff.

Clarity was sought on which gender made the most complaints. MM confirmed that all cases are investigated regardless of the gender of the individual reporting the case. All complaints are treated in a fair and consistent manner.

It was confirmed that an online licence checker is available to check the license status of any particular coach. Changes are to be made to make the licence checker more user friendly and more available to the athletics community/public.

Members raised a concern about whether it was possible for a coach who was suspended to still practicing. After a discussion it was agreed MM to review and report back at a future meeting.

Action MM

Following a question on cost the President acknowledged the costs relating to safeguarding were not sustainable. MM reported that UKA have been speaking with HCAF and UK Sport to work together to put pressure on sporting bodies to create a separate safeguarding unit/ body. CJ stated that this pressure was not just from athletics but across all sports. Athletics were sharing best practices and driving this forward.

5.3 Events

CA updated Members on the World Athletics plan which included focus on global conversations, more participation and increase in people, fans and partners. Other areas of focus included safeguarding and women's leadership. Being part of a global structure would enable meetings to flourish, gain additional broadcast outreach and funding. This would benefit our relationship with city partners, encourage athletes to compete and allow them to earn more prize money and gain world ranking points to qualify for major events.

CA presented the event highlights for 2022, sighting good BBC feedback and excellent streaming numbers across events. The Diamond League was a successful test event for the Commonwealth Games held at Alexander Stadium in Birmingham, with peak viewing figures of 1.5million on the TV plus 1.1 million via the web/digital platforms.

Members noted that the only other city bidding to host EA2026 was Budapest in Hungary. They are a strong contender and both Birmingham and Budapest have positives for their respective bids.

Members asked for an update on events being held at Gateshead. It was noted that that the Chair and Interim CEO had met with Gateshead to discuss their relationship with UKA. This is part of a wider plan looking at how the various city partners around the country can support the development of future events and vice versa.

A member raised a concern that the BBC had not treated the coverage of para athletes the same as able bodies athletes. This was subsequently discussed. MM to raise this with the BBC. **Action MM.**

Members acknowledged a huge positive step forward that para-athletes receive the same amount of prize monies as able bodied athletes for events outside the core Diamond League programme.

5.4 Performance

TY presented on performance providing an update on the strategy for the UKA World Class Programme. He reported that engagement on performance, accountability and preparation with athletes and coaches is a key principle. These sit alongside understanding athletes' performance opportunities, their needs and having the capacity to deliver bespoke support, focused on progression towards medals.

It was noted that work continues on creating an innovation centre at the Alexander Stadium in Birmingham. whilst the foot print at Loughborough would be reduced, it remains a key training centre hub for UKA and England Athletics.

The appointment of the Technical Director would be announced next week following an extensive recruitment process.

5.5 Development

CM provided an update on the UKA coaching strategy. CM Reported increasing numbers of coaches who have qualified post Covid. The course had adopted a blended learning approach and included integrated first aid training. Work had started on understanding roles and responsibilities as well as duty of care and what good practice looked like for coaches. For officials, work had started to establish roles and responsibilities for HCAFs and UKA. This work had been positive with all sharing the same vision. The work on phasing out the use of fire arms in athletics continues. A joint paper with the police authorities has been presented to the Home Office for them to consider a significant investment into the wider introduction of an electronic starting systems.

To promote clean athletics the education strategy included an ongoing series of education which was being rolled out as part of the live 2022-23 implementation plan at various events across the UK. The clean athletics module has been integrated into the introductory coach and leader education programme, so removing a barrier for module completion.

It was reported that the Trackmark directory was near completion and the UKA Rulebook was now live. A question had been raised as to whether the rulebook could be presented in a more electronic friendly format online. CM confirmed this is being reviewed.

CM provided an overview of the working groups. Details to be shared with members. **Action MD**

5.6 Transgender

MM shared an update of the work of the project group who had been created to advise on transgender inclusion within athletics. Members had been chosen based on their fields of expertise. A discussion paper had been discussed by the UKA board and was being shared with HCAFs. The Board have yet to decide if it will be published. UKA are in discussions with WA.

5.7 Governance

MD updated members on the members code of conduct. It was last formally updated a number of years ago and following the adoption of the new articles and changes in terminology an update was required. Members to provide comments on the document by the end of June 2022 to MD. **Action Members**

MD advised members that a new set of Election Regulations have been approved by the Board and shared with Members for information. Work continues on the development of a process for the appoint/renewal of the road running representative.

5.8 Finance

MD reported that the year-end accounts had been completed. The main challenges from the previous year were the conversion of commercial deals coming out of Covid, increased costs around event delivery and the excessive safeguarding costs that had not been anticipated and planned for at the start of the financial year. Currently we are in mid audit, once the audit has completed final accounts will be shared with Members. **Action MD**

6. Home Countries update:

HCAF's discussed the selection for Commonwealth Games, expressing disappointment at the number of places offered to each country.

Membership numbers were discussed with some age groups showing either a reduction or increase across all countries. It was agreed to be the responsibility of all to support and build interest and participation in the sport. A review of the 2022 track and field year will help provide a clearer picture on competition participation and membership trends.

7. Volunteer Updates:

Members raised a question over having two websites UKA and British Athletics. It was reported that it would be changed to only having one website, UKA. This would be a big project and would take time to implement but is targeted for by March 2023. The UKA Board had agreed to phase out the British Athletics brand with a refocus on UKA and 'the team'.

Members raised a concern that the new rule book had no index facility which caused frustration. Functionality to be reviewed. **Action CM**

Members expressed a wish to see integration of the athlete membership system across all HCAF to enable league providers to easily check athlete registrations. It was reported that this would be a significant project to undertake due to the different systems currently used across the HCAFs.

Members asked for an update on starters (officials) numbers as some meetings had not gone ahead due to the lack of starters. It was reported that various clubs had invested in alternative systems. Work had been done to remove firearms from athletics and CM had been part of the group who had submitted a paper for consideration to the Home Office.

Members discussed the changing attendance at road races. CJ reported that England Athletics had recruited a road race manager and would expect to see positive changes in this area.

Members discussed the challenges that officials face at events. The number of new officials undertaking training and the efforts undertaken to ensure quality was maintained. A concern was raised over the low number of officials at some events and what steps are taken to address This.

Any Other Business

No further business raised.

The meeting closed at 4.45pm

Summary of Actions

Point	ACTION	Responsible
Feb 22 1	Ongoing dialogue with World Athletics (WA) regarding the logo size on athlete vests. UKA had sent a communication to WA and had not received a response. Action to remain open.	MM
June 22 3	It was raised that Members would like more time to review papers for future meetings. This was noted and future discussion will be held with the President to agree timelines.	IB/MD
June 22 5.2	Members raised a concern about whether it was possible for a coach who was suspended to still practicing. MM to review and report back at a future meeting.	MM
June 22 5.3	UKA to discuss the level of televised coverage of para-athletes at events, with the aim to increase coverage on the BBC.	MM
June 22 5.5	Share membership and roles of the UKA working group slides with members	MD
June 22 5.7	Members to review the Members code of conduct document and provide written feedback to MM by end of June.	All Members
June 22 5.8	Upon audit completion, share a copy of the final year end accounts with Members.	MD
June 22 7a	Review index function of online rule book due to reports of it working correctly.	CM