

**Outcomes of the London Regional Council Meeting
Held on Wednesday, 22nd January, 2014
At Kings Cross Premier Inn, London**

Present

Peter Crawshaw (PGC) – London Council Co-Chair / Officials Portfolio
Tony Shiret (TLS) – London Council Co-Chair / England Council Chair
Geoff Morphitis (GM) – Clubs Portfolio
Tim Soutar (TJS) – Governance Portfolio

Apologies

Lorna Boothe (LB) – Coaching Portfolio
Steve Bosley (SB) – Schools Portfolio
Ben Noad (BN)

In attendance: Julia Bailey (JB) – CCSO South London
Chris Minn (CM) – London Athletics website
Bob Smith (BS) – EA London Area Manager
Paul Merrywest (PM) – Representing Chair, Essex County AA
Tom Pollak (TP) – Chair, Surrey County AA
Ivor Wiggett (IW) – Chair, Middlesex County AA

Basis of preparation

Outcomes show the decisions made at London Regional Council Meetings but not the full debate at those meetings to reach those decisions. Publication of separate Minutes and Outcomes allows the Council to have a full debate for the record (Minutes) while keeping interested parties informed of important decisions reached (Outcomes). Minutes are not formally approved until the next Council Meeting. These Outcomes are based on the Draft Minutes of the Council meeting of 22nd January, which have been circulated among those present with amendments incorporated. The London Regional Council next meets on 16th April, 2014.

1. Welcome

PGC took the chair and opened the meeting.

2. Apologies

See above re Council Members. BS reported that apologies had also been received from David Ralph (Chair, Kent County AA).

3. Minutes 6th November 2013 meeting (attached): confirmation of accuracy

EA Matters: GM requested adjustment / clarification re TJS's comments re compliance policy. It was agreed that the sentence should read: "T. Soutar advised that the NGB should not introduce a compliance policy in April 2014 before consulting with the sport." With that exception Members agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting were a true record of the meeting.

4. Matters arising where not already on agenda

a) **Co-opting of members of London Council:** PGC reminded the meeting that, under the EA Articles of Association, Elected Members were requested to co-opt “such additional members ... with appropriate skills and who reflect the diversity of athletics within the relevant region.” TLS said there can be a maximum of 6 Co-Opts per Regional Council.

A discussion followed, focussed on both the above “skills” and “diversity” criteria. With regard to the latter, TLS said that he had already asked members of the England Council to consider the level of representation by females and minorities on Regional Councils. All Members and the County Chairs described the current degree of diversity within the membership of their own club / association committees. TJS raised the issue of the age of average committee and feels a huge issue of succession planning is just around the corner. There was general agreement that the matter of average age of volunteers needs to be addressed by the NGB.

All Members were asked to e mail the Co-Chairs with their own suggestions for Co-opted members so that a short list can be drawn up for decision at the next meeting, and it was agreed that it is appropriate to communicate widely within the Region with a view to attracting potential volunteers.

Action: All Members to reflect and consult within their own clubs and Networks and provide suggested Co-Opts that meet the criteria discussed by end-March. County Chairs also invited to suggest names, though election of Co-Opted Members will be by Elected Members only.

Action: PGC and TLS to agree appropriate communication to be placed on London website / e mailed to clubs.

b) **YDL: Year-end / “Reflect & Review “ meeting:** UK Youth Development League had sent a questionnaire to clubs, followed by a Reflect and Review meeting in Birmingham on 30th November which included a presentation by Cherry Alexander and Roger Simons on the feedback received from clubs. A sub-group of the YDL was set up to examine proposals re a limited number of the issues raised, and clubs were asked to vote in January for their favoured option.

After GM (who had attended the November meeting) had given a summary, a general discussion followed regarding the process and outcomes. TLS expressed concern that the major issues included in the questionnaire such as distance of travel had not yet been addressed. TP said that his own club (Hercules Wimbledon) had opted not to join the restructured YDL and was comfortable with that decision, preferring to focus on a Network based competition in South London that involved much reduced travel time.

TJS focussed on two key issues:

- The League provides an important step in the performance pathway: he is concerned that insufficient priority is being given to the development needs of young athletes, as evidenced by the way in which the recent process for voting on the sub-group proposals had been organised. He felt that this had (given especially the very short timescales) encouraged clubs to vote for whichever proposal was likely to result in the highest points score for their club, rather than what was best for athlete development.
- Governance: while it was no surprise (it having been signalled on the formation of the League) that there had been no AGM / election of officers, he was concerned that clubs would continue to feel disenfranchised with this continued. He urged the League in the meantime to involve clubs at an early stage in debating and resolving the more material issues flagged in the questionnaire.

There was a general concern that the YDL does not reflect the needs of many clubs in London, and that several have opted out of the YDL in whole or part for 2014, whilst others that remain are far from happy.

Action: PGC to circulate draft letter to EA raising concerns of London Regional Council (TLS asked that this be submitted in final form prior to the 29th January England Council meeting).

c) **Joint assurance audit:** TLS reminded the meeting of the background to the recent review, commissioned by Sport England, by accountants Moore Stevens to ensure that SE funding is being used correctly, and said that a draft report has been circulated – comments due back by Friday 24th January. The EA Board has already met to discuss its response and the UKA Board were due to do so shortly. TLS has requested that clubs are kept in the loop on the findings and the outcomes of the audit.

d) **ELSE: TLS attendance at meeting / confirmation of new Field representative for London:** PGC reminded the meeting of the purpose / function of the ELSE Tri-Regional Officials group. TLS reported on his attendance at a recent ELSE team meeting – a lot of work goes into their role. PGC explained Bob Miller has stepped down as London Field rep and that the ELSE group had recommended by that Steve Marshall (Middlesex COFSec) re appointed by the London Regional Council to take over. PGC proposed that Steve’s appointment be confirmed and this was unanimously agreed by the meeting.

Action: PGC to e mail Steve Marshall to confirm his appointment as London Field rep, and to inform Wendy Haxell (ELSE Secretary) of this decision.

PGC summarised that the full London team of ELSE representatives is now:

Track – Gill Freeman

Field – Steve Marshall

Timekeeping – Paul Langston

Starter / Marksman – Gerald Alterman

(Since reconfirmed as correct)

5. Report London Manager:

a) **Run! / participation:**

- i. **Run! newsletter:** had been circulated prior to meeting. PGC asked if all attendees were on the usual (monthly) circulation list for this. IW said that he was not. There were no questions arising from the latest two newsletters.

Action: BS to ensure that County AA Chairs and SEAA Chair are added to mailing list for Run! newsletter.

- ii. **Progress vs Sport England targets:** BS stated that London (approximately 13% of the England population) has achieved twice as many participants as the rest of England combined. Key statistics and targets had been circulated prior to the meeting. BS commented that all NGB’s have to increase participation (a 25% increase in participation has been requested from EA by Sport England – this amounts to an additional 500,000 coming into the sport), and many are struggling to achieve their targets. The link to the Active People Survey (APS) results is difficult because Athletics is shown as having about two million participants but perhaps only c5% of these are involved in “mainstream” athletics which can be recorded by the NGB. The challenge is to get new starters into the mainstream of the sport, the clubs: retention is the key.

TLS shared the APS results, which conversely showed a decline in the numbers participating in Athletics in London, and explained some of the problems in reconciling that picture with the success of Run! and the 150,000 plus active / new participants within the London region. Outside London, efforts are being made to work in partnership with other organisations, to supplement recruitment via EA’s own branded initiatives such as Run England and AthleFIT but the effectiveness of that remains to be seen. Eight other cities have had opportunities for matched funding but that has not as yet been taken up.

GM commented on figures for use of Allianz Park for Athletics where footfall of paying customers has increased from 2400 in 2012 to 3300 in 2013. GM went on to praise the Run! Activator based at

Allianz Park (Jared Keely) for his good work – TLS asked for a case study on Jared and the Allianz Park project.

Action: GM to circulate figures and liaise with BS to see how a case study can be put together for potential benefit to other Regions.

b) *Education: courses planned / held:* a summary of scheduled courses had been circulated. BS reported that 40 applications had been received in response to the advertisement for new Coach Education tutors in London. He has asked for speed on the process of selecting London based tutors so that can be selected and attained the necessary experience to be in place for the start of next winter. There are currently only two tutors based inside the M25. London wants to appoint a minimum of 12 tutors.

6. Counties - update

PGC invited each of the County Chairs to comment on their recent / upcoming championships and to raise any other current issues of concern.

a) *Cross-country championships:* Surrey's event had been challenging to stage in difficult conditions due to flooding from the River Mole. Despite that, the numbers of senior male and female finishers were both at record levels. Essex: numbers entered up but those taking part was down. Middlesex: numbers same or around normal.

b) *Upcoming indoor Championships:* Essex: numbers (including schools) up c20%, with 45 girls entered in the u15 60m. Surrey: champs at Sutton again. TLS asked why Surrey don't move champs to Lee Valley. TP reported that difficulties with public transport from South London to Lee Valley are a major reason, combined with concern that the Sutton indoor facility (now the only one south of the Thames) may not be supported longer term if it is not used for this level of competition. Middlesex are hosting the Tri counties (including also Kent and Herts) indoor meeting over 2 days – promote on the London website.

c) *Planned outdoor Championships:* Kent (e mail report from David Ralph) have chosen the May Bank holiday weekend for County Champs. Essex are splitting their main Championship across two weekends (18th & 25th May), with 10km, steeplechase and relays also set for the end August. Surrey will also be on the May Bank holiday – standards and numbers are again expected to be up due to the later May date. Middlesex Championships also May Bank holiday weekend – hoping to be offering online entries – and on 13th July will hosting "8 counties" Senior inter counties meeting – probably at Mile End. PGC asked for confirmation of the venue when received. PM also reported that Essex were looking at possible new on-line entry systems, as their existing system does not have all the functionality that they would like. PGC referred to the system that EA (Andy Day) had offered to County Associations at the meetings with County Chairs (attended by David Staines on behalf of Essex) during 2013.

Action: IW to confirm venue of "8 Counties" meeting.

Action: PGC to follow up with Andy Day re status of provision of on-line entry system for County Associations.

7. SEAA: Competitions

No update. BS reported that he had again invited SEAA to send a representative to the Council meeting, but that no response had been received.

8. EA matters:

a) *Affiliation:* PGC asked TJS and GM, as members of the EA Process Advisory Group to give a summary of progress. They explained that there are three sub-groups:

- TJS is on a sub-group looking at who should register / pay registration fees: that also includes Neil Costello (east Region), Mark Wall (East Midlands Region) and Andy Barber (EA);

- GM is on a sub-group looking at flexibility / systems, recognising for example that many clubs' membership runs on a calendar year basis. This includes Lee Dakin (UKA IT);
- A third group, chaired by Wendy Sly, is looking at benefits of membership.

TJS went on to set out some of the current thinking within his sub-group. Key points are:

- Starting point is that the costs of the sport must be borne somewhere, and that the Government will over time probably be contributing less.
- A registration scheme, whether it requires payment or not, for competing athletes and possibly others is a requirement for any external funders, in both the public and private sectors.
- "Active competitive athletes" seen as the group who most benefit currently from the sport, and so in principle they should be bearing the related costs. Those are currently likely to be defined as "Affiliated athletes under UKA Rules".
- Leagues (more strictly the clubs comprising Leagues) will be asked to come on board.
- Concern not to rush through any UKA Rule change.
- Volunteers should register but not be required to pay a fee (could still be optional): note that licensed officials and coaches are already registered.
- Several other key principles drafted:
 - Fairness across the sport;
 - Simplicity of implementation;
 - Self-policing should happen if the right approach is taken (e.g. consideration being given to disclosure on PoT).
- Group is due to submit its recommendations to the England Council, and these will also be incorporated into the upcoming consultation process (see 8(c) below).
- Changes will be effective from 2014/15 year.

GM also stressed the need to win the hearts and minds of the clubs that participate in the leagues, and summarised the work of his sub-group:

- Concept of a rolling year (e.g. joining / registering in October, with related payment then covering the next 12 months) accepted as a key principle. It appears that this functionality is already present on the existing system, but had for some reason been "suppressed". Scottish Athletics and other sports already apply this approach. To be trialled by Shaftesbury Barnet H. and a few other clubs.
- "Online payment" offering clubs the options to pay registration fees online rather than paying via cheque is also progressing, with target live date of 1st April 2014.
- "Club portal" could potentially be used to collect club subs, allowing athletes to take a self-service approach - log in to pay club subs and EA fee. Payment would go direct to the clubs account instantly – club websites can integrate with the system.

GM was positive about these developments and surprised that more hadn't been done to promote benefits of the portal which can be hugely beneficial to the clubs as well as to EA.

TP commented that in his opinion clubs / leagues may well wish to see some "enticement" to come on board.

- b) *Active people survey results* – see item 5(a) above.
- c) *Outcomes of National Council*: TLS referred to these being now put on the EA website on a timely basis. He highlighted the following:
- A Shared Service agreement between EA and UKA is to be signed shortly.
 - Dean Hardman is working on consultation / club conferences on behalf of the National Council. These are scheduled for late March / early April. Further communication to follow soon on this.
 - 128,000 affiliated members with u11 included this financial year. Looking for 30,000.
 - London “underperforming” on affiliation. TLS stresses 3 clubs left with action to be taken if they still don’t comply.
 - Presentation on competition strategy from Cherry Alexander. National Council didn’t feel it was functional or anything new.
 - Portfolio system regionally was discussed – how to make it work better? Based on feedback from the all-council conference, some Regional Council members felt they were under-employed.
 - Andy Barber is working on a e mail facility that can be used to facilitate communication with clubs by Regional Councils. Regional websites – similar model to that used in London – also under consideration.
 - Updated financial forecast for 2013/14 being prepared, together with budgets for 2014/15.
- d) *Election of new EA Board members*: TJS is standing for election as a new EA Board member. As there are more than two nominations nationally, an election is required. All present expressed their personal support for TJS.

9. Portfolios:

Draft job descriptions had been circulated by PGC in advance of the meeting. These are not new documents but have recently been re-issued in connection with the National work on portfolios described above. No comments were made at the meeting, and PGC asked Members (especially portfolio holders looking at their own areas of responsibility) for any comments / suggestions on these to be sent to him.

Action: All Members to e mail comments to PGC by end-March.

10. Items for noting:

- a) *New affiliation applications by London clubs*: PGC had circulated a summary paper in advance of the meeting. The following new clubs were noted as having been accepted for affiliation:

BOARS (Brookes Old Athletes & Runners)
Weir Archer Academy,
London City Athletics Club
Good Gym, London AC
Windrush Triathlon Club.

PGC explained that the London Region panel charged with reviewing new applications for affiliation currently comprises himself and TLS, supported by BS. If any other Members wish to join the panel, they should contact PGC.

- b) *Dates / rolling agenda for future meetings*: PGC referred to the paper and schedule that he had circulated in advance of the meeting. There was general agreement by Members with the principles contained therein, with London Regional Councils preceding each England Council meeting by a week or so. PGC agreed to circulate an updated version once the England Council dates for 2014 are fixed.

Action: PGC to circulate updated version by end-February.

11. AOB:

- England Athletics will be meeting with three Area Associations to discuss future partnership working in February.

Date of next Meeting:

Wednesday, 16th April at 6.00pm

DRAFT