

# Avon Athletic Association

## (Affiliated to England Athletics)

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### MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

Held :- 19<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

At Civil Service Club, Filton Avenue, Bristol.

**PRESENT** : Peter GRIFFIN (President); Graham HOWELL (Chair); Mike DOWN (Vice Chair); Mike STRANGE (Sec); Mike ANDREWS (Treas); Ray GOODING (Officials Co-ordinator); Keith BRACKSTONE (Coaching Co-ordinator); Dave COALES (Road - Team Manager / Team Bath AC); Bill KINGSTON (Life Member); Lesley NUNN (Avon Schools AA); Stuart NUNN (Yate & District AC); Mike WILLCOX (GWR); Steve COGHLAN (North Somerset AC); Richard GWYN (England Athletics); Jackie HILLEARD (Wesport).

**APOLOGIES** : Andy HEYES (Clevedon AC/ XC Co-ordinator); Gordon ROBBINS (Road Running Co-ordinator); Pam GOODING (Life Member); Barry SMART (Life Member); James MURPHY (Westbury Harriers / Welfare Officer); Hilary NASH (Bristol & West AC); Neil MILLER (EA SW Council); Hugh BURCHARD; Matt FOAD (England Athletics).

### MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

#### Acceptance

The Minutes were accepted as a true record of the Meeting .

### MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

#### SECRETARY

##### County Vests

The Secretary assured the Meeting that the process of vest purchase was in hand although a little delayed.

##### England Athletics

The Secretary had not written to Mike Summers at England Athletics to convey the Count's expressed views on re-organisation and its impact on the South West Region but had instead conveyed them through Cy Knibb. Cy Knibb is an existing Member of Council. Neil Miller is expecting with the South West Council to discuss the same subject with Mike Summers in the near future.

##### Packers Track

The Secretary confirmed that Bristol City Council would include the UKA Facilities Officer for the County in any detail discussion on the specification for this proposed track.

### COACHING

#### Bristol / Kenya Initiative

Hannah Alderson, Harry Webb, Eleanor Whimshurst, Steve Mitchell and Imogen Ainsworth are the local athletes selected to travel to Kenya with the opportunity of experiencing the training camp of Kip Keino.

### AVON SCHOOLS AA / WESPORT

#### Competition

Lesley Nunn on behalf of the Schools Association was not entirely happy that the WESPORT Competition Team appeared to be ignoring systems currently in place as they proceeded to assist in the organisation Athletics Competition in the County. There seemed at this early stage to be little justification in disregarding routines that had been developed and found to work over recent periods.

Jackie Hilleard from Wesport asked to be put in the picture fully of any disquiet that existed and promised to bring matters to the attention of the Competition Team. She also qualified that the Competition Team had been established through the Youth Sports Trust to better organise the interface with a number of targeted School Sports and Athletics was one of those Sports.

### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

#### Athlete Movements

Peter Griffin picked up on this point discussed at the previous meeting, asking what the consequences might be for a club who signed too many athletes and could not give those athletes adequate competition outlets. Peter expressed concern generally for athletics.

Keith Brackstone reflected that this movement was a fact of life within athletics with athletes always seeking to improve by moving to clubs that were able to offer the level of competition that suited them. Clubs were able to field A, B & C Teams (even in National Championships) so the restrictions perceived in fact did not exist. The Avon Minutes carried a restricted view covering only movements within the County. This regrettably did not provide a picture Nationally.

# **Main Meeting**

## **SECRETARY**

### **Jackie Hilleard**

Jackie Hilleard was welcomed to the meeting. Jackie was in attendance as Sports Project Officer for Wesport with a remit for Athletics as one of her sports.

### **Richard Gwyn**

Richard was in attendance for his final Avon AA Meeting representing EA. His position (Club & Coach Support Officer) will in future be filled by Matt Foad who previously held the similar position for the southern half of the Region.

Tributes were paid to Richard by all at the Meeting for the wholehearted and professional way that he had represented EA. Richard thanked everyone for the kind words and pledged to actively continue his involvement in Athletics.

### **Joan Hill**

The County was represented at the Funeral of Joan on 5<sup>th</sup> Dec 2008 and the President arranged a floral tribute on behalf of the Association.

### **Membership UKA**

A reminder had been received from UKA that the County had not renewed its membership last April. This matter is now in hand and the Treasurer is preparing to pay the Affiliation Fee.

### **Elections – SW Regional Council**

Nomination Forms have been circulated for elections to the South West Council. However no proposals were received from the floor.

### **Avon Athletics Network**

The current progress toward the Network was circulated by Keith Brackstone prior to the meeting and discussed as below.

England Athletics has indicated that a successful bid has been received from this area to form one of their newly conceived 'Networks'.

Keith Brackstone has fronted the bid that includes not just the County Association but also the 3 local Universities, the 4 Unitary Authorities and all Clubs in the area. Meetings to firm up arrangements with England Athletics (Chris Jones, Richard Wheater and Matt Foad) and Wesport (the hosting body and partners in the bid) (Melonie Gregory and Jackie Hilleard) have taken place recently. Keith Brackstone & Mike Strange represented Avon AA.

Bullet points indicate the main areas of emphasis derived from meetings:-

1. The Avon Bid was one of 10 accepted and was one of the highest scoring bids.
2. That many of the bids were at the top end of the £50,000 maximum (one was even for £75,000).
3. That the £48,504 requested in the Avon Bid was not all agreed and that a sum between £35 and 40,000 was likely to be approved
4. That the Avon bid was very aspirational and now needed a lot more detail, including:
  - a. Management structures.
  - b. Rules and Regulations as to how the Avon Network would work in practice.
  - c. Details of funding from the partners.
5. That a formal agreement would need to be drawn up between the Avon Athletics Network and EA/Wesport.
6. That a recruitment process would follow once the above had been finalised and a job description and person specification agreed.
7. That the Network must be involved in EA initiatives such as Quad Kids/Sportshall, the Tesco Great School Run, the Super '8' Event and London Marathon mini-marathons.

The EA focus is very much on coach and club support.

Keith's vision was very much more an holistic one with clubs and coaches linked with athletes and all three groups in turn linked with the Unitary Authorities and Education Providers. Thereby the County has systems to identify and develop athletes (and ensure they are passed up the development chain as they progress through school, FE and HE), has systems to identify and develop coaches and officials and to deliver competition at the school development level, at the social level (through running clubs and mass participation events) and at the high performance level.

At present EA and Wesport are in dialogue about a standard template for a part-time coach. Keith believes that, to be successful the Avon Network needs to stay true to the concept of the initial bid. He believes that it is essential for the partners to meet now that it is confirmed that £35 - 40,000 will be available and they should decide what level of funds they also can commit from April 2009. They should also now confirm what they would wish to see delivered to meet their agenda within the scope of the original bid.

Keith has also contacted another Network that has been in existence for some time as he anticipates that they will have a Constitution and Rules in place that could serve as guidelines acceptable to EA/Wesport.

The Job Description would in part fit the profile of that required by the Avon Coaching Co-ordinator. For this reason and that he was the initiator of the bid Keith informed that he would like to be considered a candidate for the position of Avon Athletics Network Co-ordinator. Keith had offered to assist with the writing of Job Description and Person Descriptions in line with the bid profiles. It was however made clear to Keith that this decision would preclude him from further involvement in the recruitment process to comply with 'Fair and Effective Recruitment'.

Keith's feeling about the imminent recruitment of a Part Time Coach before the Network decides exactly what it requires is that the overall grant would be diluted and the task of the Network Co-ordinator would be impaired.

The meeting moved that we recommend to EA/Wesport that they appoint a full time Co-ordinator in order to drive this venture forward and that in our opinion the ideal person to fulfill the position is the person who has conceived the bid and driven the venture to this advanced stage, Keith Brackstone.

**Motion proposed by Mike Down, Seconded by Peter Griffin, carried Unanimously.**

## **TREASURER**

### **Current Balances**

Total £ 29,920.50

HSBC Current £ 8,593.72                      HSBC Deposit £ 21,326.78

## **OFFICIALS**

### **Firearms Certificates for new Level 2 Starters**

The letter from the Officials Co-ordinator to Paula Gowing at UKA (Officials) had been passed on to David Brown (Welfare). David's positive response indicated that something was being done about existing Starters. However our Officials Co-ordinator still considers the situation for new Starters to be unsatisfactory.

### **Level 2 Course - YOSC**

The planned L2 Course will take place at YOSC on Sun Feb 1<sup>st</sup> starting at 9.30am.

### **SW Officials Conference**

This Conference is planned for Sun 15<sup>th</sup> March at Exeter.

### **Road Race Officials**

A Road Race referee is required for the Sri Chinmoy Self-Transcendence Race Series 2009, on the following dates 7.15pm on 19th May, 9th June, 30th June, 14th July. No-one spoke up to offer assistance.

## **COACHING**

**Appointment** – The new Athletics Coach to the City Academy, Bristol is 800m runner Martin Flook. Martin was most recently employed by Wesport and South Gloucester Council and has good experience training youngsters and has also worked with disabled athletes.

## **ASSET**

The third session took place today (Mon 19<sup>th</sup> Jan) in Ashton Court. Thanks to the organization of Lesley Nunn there was an excellent turnout from the Avon Schools Team. Altogether there were 22 boys and 13 girls present, all except 4 being from the Avon Schools Teams.

Coaches present were Alison Hurford, Mike Down, Dave Bedwell and Dave Taylor from Bristol, Neil Miller and Rick Wallis from Westbury, Alan Thomas from Yate and Steve Hollier from Clevedon. There were also several parents who stayed and watched the session (and they included one or two notable runners in their own right - Julian Emery and Mike Jacobs). Thanks to all of these people who really made the sessions work, as it was hoped when the sessions started athletes and their coaches would attend and the whole group would work together.

In the wash-up discussion – it was decided to have the Fourth ASSET session on Tuesday 17 February 2009 commencing at 10.30 a.m. (which is during school half-term). At present this is provisional as we are looking to use the University of Bristol Outdoor Sports Centre at Coombe Dingle. We will attempt to incorporate a lecture as well as the practical session and would welcome input on the subject, Sports Nutrition, Strength and Conditioning, avoiding Injury or even one on being an athlete in Higher Education?

## **ROAD RUNNING**

### **London Mini Marathon**

Bitton Road Runners are organising on behalf of Avon AA the Regional Trial for this national event on 7<sup>th</sup> Feb 2009 which forms part of the London Marathon weekend. Age Groups B & G, U13; U15 & U17. Keith Brackstone has volunteered to Team Manage these youngsters but he does seek guidance from all relevant Coaches and Club organisations. This is extremely prestigious for the kids so we urge that no-one that could be in contention is overlooked. It is also important as the event is on our doorstep that we need to support a strong Avon team. Please everyone help Keith in his task. Gordon Robbins is fronting the organisation of the event and although all seems to be in place at this time he would like a couple of offers as Marshals if anyone is free. A handout detailing all aspects of the event is in circulation.

## **RRLG**

The Road Running Co-ordinator informs that the following information has been issued recently. His belief is that it appears to continue to undermine the role of clubs. The RRLG (Run Britain) do not seem to be accountable to anybody they just do as they wish. Most concerning is the level of funding for the Women's Running Network which are groups which meet at various locations with no local club structure

### **1 Park Run**

At the moment Park Run organise 10 free to enter 5K Time Trials in various parts of England. England Athletics/ Sport England are now providing funding of £100,000 per annum to Park Run to increase their weekly runs from 10 to 50 and expand their geographical scope.

This will inevitably remove participants from our club organised races.

Where is the subsidy for races organised by clubs, all of which operated by volunteers.

Will the £100,000 be used to pay the organising team?

### **2 Run England.**

England Athletics/Sport England will provide £200,000 per annum to the Women's Running Network to expand their operation outside the South West and to broaden the groups to include men.

They aim to have 50000 additional people running with them at least once a week.

This will take potential members away from our clubs.

This is a huge sum of money, could it have been poured into clubs to encourage participation instead

### **3 Online club**

Real Buzz will start the online club soon. Membership will be £12.99 and will entitle members to a £2 discount on UKA permitted races.

UKA permitted races will be obliged to advertise the online club on their race entry form or in some other manner.

This will take prospective members away from our clubs. I thought the cost of membership of the online club would be much higher

### **Norton Radstock Half Marathon**

It is disappointing the Norton Radstock half has been cancelled pressure of work on the organiser and excessive demands of the local council.

### **Avon Road Race Calendar**

**Issue 39 circ 2 is the current issue**

New race added Harptree Havoc 29th March

## **TRACK & FIELD**

### **Avon Track & Field Champs**

Wiltshire appears now to not be contemplating joining forces with us for their County Champs.

There were no dissenters to the proposal that U17 athletes can enter f.o.c. to these Champs provided they get their entry in on time.

### **(INDOOR)**

#### **SW Champs**

This event held at Cardiff on Jan 10/11 was still a fairly low key event with few entries (usually straight finals). Pre-entry just after Christmas did create problems, a good number of local talent ran in the open events rather than take the trouble to enter on line a week before?

## **CROSS COUNTRY**

### **Co-ordinator**

A vote of thanks was passed to Andy Heyes who has indicated that he intends to step down from his position at the AGM. Andy has found working away a particular problem in the execution of this job – we all wish him well for the future.

A call for a volunteer to fill the role was not taken up at the meeting!

### **South West Inter-counties & Champs**

Congratulations to the Avon Teams (and their Team Managers) who performed excellently at the recent SW XC Inter-Counties Champs at Bicton in Devon.

Avon won the Snr Women & were 2<sup>nd</sup> in the U20 Men Team events and the following won Individual Gold Medals : Phil PARRY – V40; Eleanor WIMSHURST – U17W; Floren SCRAFTON – U15G & Miles BURTON – U13B.

The Selection Meeting for the CAU Champs at Nottingham on March 7<sup>th</sup> will take place at the Sidcot Arms on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> Jan.

### **Cardiff Cross Challenge**

We retained our Men's & Women's Inter-Area titles at this prestigious event.

## **SPORTS:HALL**

### **Avon Sports:Hall Champs – 17 Jan**

Once again a very successful Championships, selections for the South West Championships are currently being made.

## **SOUTH WEST REGION REPORT**

### **Council**

A report from Neil Miller on the South West Regional Council meeting at Exeter on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> Jan:- Mike Summers (Chief Executive of England Athletics) and Chris Mallender (new SW and Midlands Regional Manager) came down to discuss the reorganisation with the council. I'll cut across the history, why's and wherefores, and give a top down description of how things will now stand.

The relationship between UK Athletics and England Athletics (EA) is unchanged (but poorly understood – hopefully EA will put a page on their website about this). UK Athletics remains the outward (international) facing body, and is also responsible for rules, regulations, selection etc. England Athletics is the 'inward' facing body, responsible for clubs, organisation, education, etc.

England Athletics will centralise all bookings for courses, conferences, etc. You might not (like me) have realised that the EA site already lists all coaching courses much more comprehensively than the UK:A site (I was in the habit of checking the UK:A site for coaching courses, which were always out of date).

There will be three 'tri-regional' territories – our own being the 'South West and Midlands'. Chris Mallender is (as of 5<sup>th</sup> January) in charge of SW & Midlands, with budgetary responsibility for courses, conferences and other events. Morag Ford (who you will know from the South West office) will be the organiser for facilities (i.e. for setting up courses etc.) as well as administrative support for the CCSO's (see below), but bookings by participants will go through EA central. Morag will work from home – indeed, I don't think that there will really be a SW & Midlands 'office' as such.

There are 6 'Club and Coach Support Officers' (CCSO) in the territory, with Matt Foad covering Avon, Somerset, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire, and Sonya Ellis looking after Dorset, Devon and Cornwall. EA seem to regard these posts in a similar light to what went before, but looking at the number of times 'CCSO' was mentioned, I think that they will be extremely busy, as well as taking on the informed, developmental role that Sonya performed before.

The South West Council (as all others around the country) continues unchanged as 'the voice of the region', and we hope to get Chris down to meetings to listen to our voice. We were all concerned that the various courses, conferences and competitions which have greatly benefitted the region over the last few years might disappear. However, Mike stated that there would be funding for these to continue, although the initiative would now have to come from clubs and council.

Competition will continue to be provided by the old Northern, Midlands and Southern Countries AA, and this will be put this on a more formal basis. As you may have heard, there will even be a reappearance of the 'AAAs' athletics championships in the summer. Sonya has lobbied successfully for separate provision for the various South West championships, which should continue in similar format.

There are a number of new initiatives which are starting to take shape, although since the new structure has only been in place for 2 weeks, these are very much embryonic. 'Athletics Networks' will be aimed at collaborative club initiatives, although the nature of these will be (in the early stages) highly heuristic and up to local initiative (I think that EA intends to use these as pilots for new schemes in some respects). Some serious money will be available to put these on a semi-professional basis. However, the awards will be for a strict 3 year basis with no 'repeat' funding, and an expectation that projects can become locally funded after that.

There will also be a roll-out of the Quad Kids, Sports Hall and Women's Running Network initiatives which we have already experienced in the South West (the latter in a gender neutral form!). There are likely to be changes on the coaching front but nothing is definite yet, so I don't want to be responsible for false rumours.

A new website will be launched soon - [www.realbuzzrunbritain.com](http://www.realbuzzrunbritain.com) – which will provide a central 'fixture list' for running events around the country. It is, in fact, already on line, but heed a health warning that the information is, at the moment, provisional.

The South West Athletics Office will remain open until 28<sup>th</sup> February, and should be used up until then. Matt, Morag and Sonya's email addresses will remain unchanged after that, and we should get word from EA Central about bookings before the SW office closes.

There were plenty of concerns aired at the meeting – broadly that the South West doesn't want to go back to being treated as a 'backwater' district, and my own concerns that the central administration will struggle to match the personal efficiency of the South West regional office, and that the CCSO's will be run off their feet. However, there are also new opportunities, and I hope that by understanding the new structure, clubs in Avon will be able to benefit from these.

General comments from the Meeting :- Are we heading back to what existed in pre re-organisation days? For us the MCAA seems to back as a major body in the structure rather than out on a limb as the Foster Report?

## **WESPORT REPORT**

Jackie Hilleard, introduced earlier in the Meeting briefly outlined her Athletics role within Wesport for the meeting.

## **CLUB NEWS**

### **North Somerset AC**

Steve Coghlan attended the meeting as a representative of the Club and asked that he be added to minute circulation. His e mail contact is [coghlan@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:coghlan@blueyonder.co.uk)

### **Bitton RR**

The Easy Runner Sodbury Slog voted 5th best race in the UK (2nd in the previous 2 years)

## **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Run for the Children**

A discussion point raised by e-mail from Neil Miller.

Following on from last year's successful event at Blaise Castle, Bristol, Neil asked is there any interest in holding a children's fun run again. With Mike Strange and Sally Coppen no longer in post, I don't know whether there is any event planned with which it could be linked – last year we linked in with the 'Let's Get Active' promotion. The 'Love Parks' week, to which we were also linked, has moved to 25 July - 2 August this year.

Westbury Harriers would be pleased to help organise this event again, whether it was on the same weekend as last year (Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June), or in July. Not so good would be 20<sup>th</sup> June or (probably) 27<sup>th</sup> June, being on the same weekends as the Oldbury and Alveston fun runs, both of which include children's fun runs.

### **GWR – Club:mark**

It would appear that the need to obtain Club:Mark has gone away for Clubs that do not have Young Members.

### **Kate REED**

Bristol & West continue to be disappointed in the treatment of Kate Reed at the Beijing Olympics. A long document has been written and the Club feel that UKA has a case to answer.

## **AGM**

The AGM is scheduled for Monday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2009.

This is a pre-notice to alert to the fact that any amendment to the Rules to be proposed at the AGM must be made in writing to the Secretary at least 28 days before the date of that Meeting.

Items for inclusion on the agenda of the AGM must also be sent to the Secretary 28 days before the date of that Meeting. The Secretary will be proposing amendments in line with changes in the line of 'Governance' of Athletics.

## **MEETING CLOSED**

At 9.40 pm

Next Meeting Date – Mon 1<sup>st</sup> June 2009.

## **FIRST CLAIM CHANGES (can also be found on the EA & MCAA web site)**

### **England Athletics, November 2008**

#### **Applicable from 01/12/08**

From Hereford & County AC to Bristol & West AC – Emily MERRICK

From Avon Valley AC to Team Bath AC – Michael TOWLER

### **England Athletics, December 2008**

#### **Applicable from 01/01/09**

From Cheltenham Harriers to Bristol & West AC – Thomas LOWE