

Avon Athletic Association

(Affiliated to England Athletics)

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING

Held :- 25th January 2010. At Civil Service Club, Filton Avenue, Bristol.

PRESENT : Peter GRIFFIN (President); Graham HOWELL (Chair); Mike DOWN (Vice Chair); Mike STRANGE (Sec); Gordon ROBBINS (Road Running Co-ordinator); Mike ANDREWS (Clevedon AC); Ray GOODING (Officials Co-ordinator); Andrea CULP (Cross Country Co-ordinator); Bill KINGSTON (Life Member); Barry SMART (Life Member); Cy KNIBB (Bristol & West AC); Keith BRACKSTONE (Bristol & West AC); Gareth THOMAS (Thornbury RC).

APOLOGIES : Hilary NASH (Treasurer); Mike WILLCOX (GWR); James MURPHY (Westbury Harriers); Tim SNOWDON (Avon Athletics Network); John DEATON (Web Master); Dave WILLIAMS (Southville Running Club); Derek WOLFE (Bristol & West AC); Lesley NUNN (Avon Schools AA); Stuart NUNN (Yate & District AC); Steve COGHLAN (North Somerset AC); Pam GOODING (Life Member); Neil MILLER (Westbury Harriers); Jackie HILLEARD (Wesport).

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Acceptance

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

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

TREASURER

Performance Grants

Performance grants were distributed as indicated with the exception of one which would have been to the Wiltshire athlete.

Funeral donation – Tom Clark

The donation to the Alzheimer's Society was made on behalf of Tom Clark.

Grant to NSAC

The Grant to North Somerset AC was paid and a note of thanks was received from their Chair, Steve Coghlan.

MAIN MEETING

35th Anniversary Dinner

In view of the previous discussions on finance the matter of the 'Dinner' was reviewed as a follow on from discussions at the last Committee meeting. People aired varied opinion on the commitment of the Association contributing toward costs and ways and means of controlling those costs.

Specific comments were:- We can not afford this function which is outdated in the present day; Athletics depends heavily on volunteers and this function is an occasion when we can all get together and honour contribution; There must be a cheaper way, do we really need a formal Dinner; Go ahead but cut the guests; We already have a commitment to proceed.

It was agreed that the ticket price should be £25 per head with only the Guest of Honour and his Lady actually being non-payers. Wine would obviously be provided to these Guests. Bearing in mind that we had already committed the £300 cost for provision of the Function Room it was decided that the total ceiling of commitment to the Association should be set at £500. (This was arrived at by discussion after an initial ceiling of £900 had been suggested.) Costs to the Association would not include the cost of honouring the Life Members to be presented at this Dinner.

It was agreed that the organiser, Peter Griffin should work with the Treasurer to achieve these objectives.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Lesley Nunn

Our good wishes were expressed to the Schools representative Lesley Nunn who was undergoing her second Hip replacement operation.

Affiliation

Southville Running Club have indicated that they will be affiliating to Avon AA and are sending their Affiliation fee. They apologised for not being able to attend this meeting

Meeting notice

The AGM of the AAA of England will be held at Alexander Stadium on Sun 14th March 2010.
There were no offers from the floor to attend this meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Current Balance's

Total £ 22,256.73

HSBC Current £ 907.04;

HSBC Deposit £ 21,349.69;

TREASURER'S REPORT 20 JANUARY 2010

1. Current Account transactions since the last meeting

16/11/2009	Sole Sisters - Course Fee grant	100235	£ 90.00		£ 1,396.88
08/12/2009	M Strange - Expenses	100276	£ 124.35		£ 1,272.53
10/12/2009	Yate & District AC - Coaching Grants	100236	£ 60.00		£ 1,212.53
21/12/2009	R Gooding - Official Sec. Exps	100277	£ 48.59		£ 1,163.94
28/12/2009	Alzheimers Society - Donation re Tom Clark	100238	£ 30.00		£ 1,133.94
31/12/2009	Yate & District AC - Coaching Grants	100239	£ 70.00		£ 1,063.94
31/12/2009	H G Nash - Treasurer's - Postage Expenses	100240	£ 6.90		£ 1,057.04
05/01/2010	North Somerset Athletic Club - Grant	100281	£ 150.00		£ 907.04

2. Deposit Account

Balance at 16 December 2009 £21349.69

3. Affiliation Fees Unpaid for 2009

Clevedon
Nailsea RC
University of Bath Student Union

Shara Durnell
Yvonne Wesbroom
David Saker

4. Cheques Issued in 2009 Un-presented at 16 January 2010

30/09/2009	P Davenport	£10.00
7/10/2009	Connell Macquistan	£58.82

5. Accounts for 2009

The accounts together with notes are presented to the Committee for information. The records are now available for "audit".

Grant Application

To Dave Palmer for Avon AA, Schools, et al use – plastic stakes for finish funnel. £125

Neil Miller (by e-mail) requested that we consider (on behalf of Dave Palmer) a grant of £125 for 100 plastic fence posts. Neil said : "We have been gradually replacing our old wooden and metal posts with plastic ones over the last few years. Metal posts are now banned from use in finishing funnels on the grounds of health and safety, and we would like to be able to mark a full length course without using metal posts anywhere, if possible. However, our stock of plastic posts is not sufficient to completely replace them".

**With the provision that these posts be available to all member clubs this motion was passed.
Proposed Mike Strange, Seconded Bill Kingston.**

OFFICIALS

England Athletics - Morag Ford

Morag, our previous contact on Officials Education is no longer involved. She does remain with EA but is only dealing with Coach Education. Natalie Shaw is her replacement.

Avon Network

The Network Plan appears to conclude that circa 100 Officials are operating in Avon. This clearly is not the case. In response the Officials Secretary has produced a chart that indicates that we have 28 Track & Field and 26 Endurance Officials in place. This chart does not include the Level 1 Officials who are considered only as 'Assistants'. Furthermore it is likely that we will lose 5 from those listed due to the fact that licence renewal has not to be implemented due to a failure to update CRB's. These Officials in danger of losing their status are: Track & Field; Samantha Britton, Martin Travis & Chris Preston / Endurance; Mike Andrews, Mike Willcox, Bob Hadden & Jon Goodland..

Level 2 Course

A Level 2 Officials Course has been arranged for 28th March 2010. Numbers of applicants so far are: Field, 5; Track 4 & Timekeeping 4. EA have indicated that the Course should be held at Filton (Wise) College where digital projectors are available in each lecture room.

Digital Projector

A limitation with Courses presentation is that we do not possess or have call on this necessary equipment. The Official Secretary has requested that a Grant be offered by the Network toward the purchase of such.

ROAD RUNNING REPORT

Run Britain - Paul Ross

It is understood that Paul has resigned as the Road Running representative on the South West Council due to his disillusionment with the activities of the Run Britain organization.

Mini London Marathon

It is assumed that Bitton will be asked to organise the London Marathon, Mini Marathon Trials again this year although no details are available to date.

Bath Half Marathon

This race will be scrutineered by BARR.

CROSS COUNTRY

South West XC Champs

This event was cancelled due to adverse weather conditions.

Neil Miller was the principal organiser on behalf of EA SW and he investigated whether the UK Athletics race permit provides any race cancellation insurance. It does not. Neil asks that other Race Directors take note!

Since there was already an outlay of more than a thousand pounds to cover, it was only possible to refund 50% of the entry fee. This has not been entirely popular.

County Champs

Some thought has gone into the future organisation of this event by the XC Co-ordinator and her helpers. It was concluded that the incorporation with a league is not really satisfactory, as an example if you come say 4th in the league race yet 1st in your County Champs it does not give the race sufficient status. It is proposed that future Avon County Champs be held on the 2nd week of December each year, to be held with the Counties of Wiltshire and Somerset and be held on the established course at Bath University. There will be a charge for the setting out of the course and facilities used. The aim is to make the event self supporting even though numbers are not expected to be large and to establish it as a permanent arrangement.

SPORTS:HALL REPORT

Avon Champs

This event organised by the Schools and held at Bristol Grammar School was deemed very successful with a strong Team going forward to the South West finals on 7th Feb at Torbay. The National finals are planned for 18th April at the NEC, Birmingham

Fun in Athletics

This Under 11 Sportshall Championships was also a victim of the weather. [Correction 24.05.2010: the event went ahead as planned on Sunday January 31st at UWE: Avon won Boys' and Girls' events]

AVON SCHOOLS AA

Cross Country Competition Dates

The reported clash of XC dates whereby intending athletes pursuing the Schools route could miss the South West XC Champs and/or the ECCU National Champs was discussed. Disappointment was expressed on behalf of the athletes who obviously would be denied top competition.

For the Schools Association Dave Turner (by e-mail) admitted to have inadvertently suggested the date without consulting the fixture list. Dave's objective was to free up the date of the SW Sportshall finals which in itself would have created another unfortunate clash.

An e-mail had been written on the 'Clashes' by Mike Down to be circulated by the Secretary.

Unfortunately due to an error in the e-mail address it was not received by the Secretary but was received by copied recipients. This e-mail was in turn copied to Lesley Nunn and a reactive letter was received from Lesley to be considered at the Meeting. The letter was defensive of the position of Avon Schools insisting that they 'do not go out of their way to create problems'. Lesley explained the lead up to the fixtures decision and the constraints (School term etc) that the Schools Association need to work within.

The whole issue was thoroughly discussed and the meeting unanimously recommended that in future some consultation should exist to avoid such fixture clash occurrences.

AVON NETWORK MATTERS

Development Plan

It was requested that comments on the Draft Avon Network Development Plan be submitted no later than Weds 27th Jan. .

Network Coaching Sessions – Pilot Project to improve fundamental athletics skills and increase participation in both Schools and Club athletics:

The first three groups, totaling forty athletes from Yrs 7&8 have started at Clevedon, Warmley, and Brislington. Selection for the fourth group, which will be in BaNES, took place last week at the BaNES SportsHall comp, and sessions will start at University of Bath in February. Initial feedback has been very positive from all concerned. Any coaches wishing to attend to observe the sessions at work and to improve their knowledge of the basics of athletics will be very welcome.

Network Coach Education Bursaries: Coaches at all levels of experience are reminded that some financial assistance towards their CPD may be available from the Avon Network. Recent bursaries have been awarded to coaches to attend coach education courses, and to attend event specific conferences and workshops. Contact should be made with the Network Co-ordinator, Tim Snowdon to discuss any request.

Network Masterclasses: 13th Dec: S&C Masterclass led by Dave Rowland at Brislington Enterprise College. 18 coaches, who between them coach over 450 athletes attended. Avon Clubs represented – Bitton Road Runners, Bristol Uni, Bristol & West, GWR, Hogweed Trotters, UWE, Patchway School, Yate&District.

Working with Disability Athletes Masterclass 24th Jan: led by Rob Ellchuk at Bath Uni, and with input from Job King (UKA Disability Athletics Support Officer Midlands & South West). 18 coaches, who between them coach over 300 athletes, attended. Avon Clubs represented – Bristol&West, North Somerset Academy, Team Bath, UWE. Apparently Avon is the first Network in England to run a course of this nature aimed at Disability athletics.

Next Masterclass – Sunday 31st Jan at Bath Uni from 11.00am to 3.00pm – **Steeplechase Coaching** and "come and try".

Further proposed Masterclasses for March – **Long Distance Running and Race Walking; Long and Triple Jump; Relay** training day for club teams.

Sprint / Relays DVD

In response to a number of requests after his successful Sprints and Relay Masterclass, Roger Walters has recently completed the production of a DVD showing a range of the sprints drills that he used in his presentation.

Copies will cost £5.00 and interested people should email if copies are required (so Roger can know numbers) and then send a cheque, payable to "Roger Walters", to Tim Snowdon.

EA SW MATTERS

Neil Miller wrote:- There is very little SW news to report, not having had a council meeting since the last Avon committee meeting. (Comments on the cancelled SW XC are contained in the XC Report).

WESPORT MATTERS

Schools Involvement

Lesley Nunn had written to say that she was disappointed that Wesport appear to be limiting their School's involvement to their target participating Schools. The kids from non participating Schools are being excluded.

CLUB NEWS

Thornbury Running Club

A very successful 'Riverbank Rollick' was reported and the entry pleasingly exceeded 300.

AGM (29th March 2010)

The Meeting was reminded that the AGM would be held 29th March 2010. Both the Chair & the Secretary indicated that they wished to stand down. Hilary Nash had also indicated that he will stand down as Team Manager for T&F.

Members were requested to give some thought toward replacements.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

MCAA Medals

The disappointing situation was expressed whereby 'Midlands' Individual Medals were not presented to athletes who held Club and South West qualification at the recent Midlands XC Champs. In fact this situation became distressing for such athletes as they were asked whilst standing on the presentation dais "What is your representative County?". A negative reply brought a request to step down from dais. The Meeting was unanimous in its disapproval of this occurrence and hoped that the South West Council might lodge its own protest. After we are all a constituent part of the Tri-Regional Group?

Revenue v Costs – What do we do?

The Secretary introduced the discussion with notes that had been issued prior to the meeting thus: 'Two subject headings on the current agenda concern the finances of the Association.. One concerns the 35th Anniversary Dinner and the other the wider issues of income streams.

Our President, Peter Griffin was quite forcible on the subject of finances when talking about the 'Dinner' and indicated that we should start to face up to this dilemma. He put suggestions that the Affiliation Fee might be scaled according to the size of club and that we seek the support of areas where our Members are contributing to the success of high revenue events.

On these suggestions remember we have recently doubled our Affiliation fees and that high revenue events also have very high associated costs that they must cover. The Run Bristol events also do contribute financially to the development of athletics in the city so we must be careful not to damage existing arrangements when putting our case. The subject has already been broached and responses were receptive so we need to put our case. It would balance things out if we could also gain a positive hearing with the Bath Half Marathon which equally carries a vast extent of support from local volunteers.

Perhaps instead of Avon AA considering contributions toward the 'Network' we could consider the 'Network' supporting us in mutually beneficial ventures. For example we currently reimburse 50% of Coach Education fees and 100% of Officials Education fees. Surely this is an area that works alongside Network objectives. Perhaps our Grant schemes could be covered by the Network and why can't our annual contribution to the Schools Association come from these funds?

We could also look closely at our links to Somerset AA. This year we were found ourselves in a rather unfortunate Cross Country event that we could have organised far better without the inputs of Somerset and of course we make a high comparable contribution to the costs of a joint County team?

We are largely talking about cutting our expenditure or replacing income streams that had increased over the years to £ 4,600 in 2008.

We should not delude ourselves that we will source regular income streams from any source. We therefore need to pitch our expenditure at around £ 2,000 per year. In that situation we can see at least survive another 10 years of life and in that time the whole shooting match will probably have changed again at UK Athletics.

First drafts of our annual accounts are attached so that you can consider our expenditure areas at a time when we must begin to balance the books.

As a footnote bear in mind that we are now considered as purely a 'Competition Provider' and we have no formal role in administering this County. We do not have formal responsibilities, we are not required to provide grants, in fact all we are expected to do is arrange our County Championships and support County teams.'

The Treasurer who was unable to make the Committee Meeting responded with relevant comments by e-mail:

'I have the impression that EA through Matt Foad were not necessarily looking to Avon AA to provide funding for the Network, although has yet to be confirmed.

Clearly clubs should now seek support from other sources for coaching and officials courses when such funding is available.

It seems that Avon AA needs to establish what function and policies it wishes to adopt and then what income streams are required to fund the projected outgoings. The existing funding balance is a major benefit but income streams need to more closely match expenditure. I would support this review being undertaken.

As a competition provider the association needs an affiliation fee to cover general administrative costs. The fee needs to be realistic as it does not sufficiently cover secretarial and other expenses at present. Of course not all clubs benefit equally so a tiered fee may be worth considering. I assume that we will leave the fee as it is for 2010.

I think it is a good idea to approach Bath and Bristol re funding from the half marathon events.

I thought we make grants to Avon Schools if and maybe when asked rather than an annual contribution! I suspect they would like to see it as a regular promise.'

The floor discussed the subject thus:

Feeling was that we should consider alternative routes to cost cutting. Taking the matter to the Clubs at the AGM would be the correct procedure.

Action : Secretary to add this to the AGM Agenda.

It was felt that we should initiate a Road Race under our own name and thus create a reliable income stream. These races do raise good money.

A levy exercised by Avon AA on competitors in Road Races would also be a means of raising revenue.

It was encouraged that contributions to the debate be made through the Secretary and the matter be a feature for resolution at the AGM.

MEETING CLOSED

At 9.56 pm

Next Meeting Date – AGM 29th March 2010.

MINUTES APPENDIX - FIRST CLAIM CHANGES

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

England Athletics, November 2009

Applicable from 01/12/09

From City of Norwich AC to Great Western Runners – Lorraine WHITMARSH

From Great Western Runners to Portishead RC – Laura PHIBBS

England Athletics, December 2009

Applicable from 01/01/10

From Bristol & West to Bideford AAC – Steve GALLIENNE

From Aldershot, Farnham & District to Bristol & West AC – Jennifer JAGGER

From Great Western Runners to Portishead RC – Laura PHIBBS