



**COUNTY CHAIRS EXPLORATORY GROUP MEETING**  
**held on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2013**  
**at Athletics House, Alexander Stadium, Birmingham**

**Present for EA:** Chris Jones (CJ), Sue Banks – *mins* (SB)

**Counties:** Ray Morgan (RM) – Warwickshire; David Staines (DS) – Essex;  
Jean Simpson (JS) – Greater Manchester;  
Arwel Williams (AW) – Merseyside; Mark Wall (MW) – Northants;  
Peter Crawshaw (PC) – Surrey; Tom Pollak (TP) – Surrey;  
David Ralph – Kent (DR); Colin Goater (CG) – Hampshire  
Sandra White (SW) – UKCAU; John How (JH) - Buckinghamshire

**Apologies:** Richard Nash, Andy Day

CJ opened the meeting with introductions and pointed out to all present the new type of Agenda that allows for more open discussions.

**Minutes of the last meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

PC asked that the four year strategy Cherry Alexander (UKA) raised at the last meeting be noted as a proposal. After this addition the minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

**Matters Arising**

- PC asked for follow up from Cherry Alexander (UKA) with regular UKA updates. **Action: CJ/CA**
- Plan to continue running Officials Conferences over the next 4 years.
- First version of the Endurance Handbook now being put together.
- Sports Hall no longer funded although club events will continue across the country. No further funding for Quadkids beyond June.
- Sainsbury's now funding major BA events during 2013 with support from National Lottery.
- SE funding satellite clubs with a lowering of age to 11 years old.
- EA 2013-2017 Update – Four Year contract now signed by SE.
- PC stated that he continues to be concerned about risk assessment (discussed at the last meeting). CJ agreed to invite Michael Hunt (Health & Safety/Facilities Manager) to next meeting to discuss this. **Action: CJ**
- After some discussion it was also agreed that it could be useful to invite the Welfare Officers (Jane Fylan and David Brown) to the meeting to discuss issues surrounding safeguarding/Child Protection policy – this being what members present had highlighted. **Action: CJ**

**Open Discussion Items**

**Local Governance**

DR reported that when he took over as County Chair he realised that the network had held no accountability, except to England Athletics. He questioned where the

link was locally and felt that networks had only been created as a funding element. He suggested that the county needed to be opened wider as County Chairs do not appear to be talking locally. He felt that the Regional Council were more of a local forum. MW also commented that he had similar experience and that when networks were set up the CCSOs took them in their own direction. It was felt that Regional Councils need to get the network Chairs and the County Chairs involved. Discussion took place around cross border working and which counties were working well. Some ideas did not suit all as it varied county to county so CJ suggested that to find a solution locally was probably the best way forward.

After more lengthy discussion on the challenges everyone faced, CJ felt it was crucial that the collaboration of networks and counties were crucial to make use of the funding we had. Many commented that Regional Councils and Counties should work in unison, rather than being fragmented. CJ confirmed that Network Panels had been started this year and having less funds was more of a reason to collaborate. CJ agreed he would mention these issues at the National Council meeting when they met on Friday. He finalised the discussion with the following action points:-

- CJ to look at the possibility of getting together the networks and counties at area level;
- Beyond this year is there potential in aligning both the funding to counties and club networks through one process to encourage them to work closely together with EA. CJ to discuss this with his team and with the national council.
- Look at Welfare/Risk issues in terms of counties and event provision (see earlier point re Michael Hunt/Welfare being present at the next meeting)

### **Growing Participation through County level competition**

MW had documents from Australia Sport regarding marketing segmentation for club participation. He wanted to share his thoughts with all present regarding the alternate ways for club recruitment for sports driven people. He said that we may even need to look at different scaling to keep people in sport. He felt that the clubs throw more and more work on to the same people in the club. Need to bring more people into participation. Discussion then followed on how various clubs attract volunteers to help in the clubs – usually parents waiting around for children. He stated that some areas of activity may be covered by the NHS as part of a health protection scheme.

RM reported that at his club many of the club volunteers were best engaged in a task that had been specifically given to them, instead of expecting them to decide what they would be best doing. JS confirmed that some clubs (including her own) used sports students from colleges to help at club events – this was good for their CV.

CJ encouraged the group to look at the English equivalent – Active People and market segmentation insight reports to inform the organisation and delivery of competitions and activities for those club athletes who perhaps train but do not compete. There could be some useful information in the data sets to inform counties around competition organisation and so on. Visit [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org) for further information.

### **Online Entry, County Funding and Marketing/Comms Support Update**

CJ confirmed that there were several counties using the online entry on a trial basis including: Hertfordshire; Lincolnshire; Gloucestershire; Avon & Somerset; RM felt that we could learn from the Hampshire system. He said it made sense for everyone to use the same system (even if they already had one in place) but it needed to be the right system.

CJ confirmed that he would get Andy Day to circulate an update on the progress.

**Action: CJ/AD**

### **Future Meeting Agenda Items and Role of the Group**

RM confirmed that he had drawn up a list of things that had been discussed at these meetings for follow up. Discussion then continued on County Champs/Area Champs (being first on the list) and it was agreed that this still needed to be reviewed next year. RM confirmed that he felt this group should spend the first half of these meetings brainstorming and the second half reviewing the list of agreed things to do/progress. Members could then send all the important points to all counties, giving them an opportunity to voice their opinions.

Next agenda to include

- Review of county championships and discussion on future dates with Cherry Alexander present
- David Brown/Jane Fylan – Welfare presentation
- Michael Hunt – facilities/risk management presentation