



**COUNTY CHAIRS EXPLORATORY GROUP MEETING  
held on Tuesday 5 February 2013  
at Athletics House, Alexander Stadium, Birmingham**

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

**Present for UKA:** Cherry Alexander (CA)

**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  
**Apologies:** Richard Nash; Sandra White

CJ welcomed everyone to the third meeting of this group (including CA from UKA) and introductions were made. He said that this gave everyone the opportunity to share the challenges that counties faced. He apologised in advance that he would have to leave the meeting part way through but confirmed that AD would Chair the latter part of the meeting.

**Notes from the previous meeting held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2013 and Matters Arising**

It was pointed out (on Page 2 under Competition and Development Model) that the sentence 'He emphasised that coaches did not discourage athletes' should read '.....coaches did not encourage athletes'.

RM raised the issue regarding pathways (briefly discussed at the previous meeting). He felt that at the moment there was no connection between county, area and national champs. Discussion followed. CA stated that coaches and athletes do not necessarily want to follow a pathway because they want flexibility to pick and choose. All agreed that elite athletes do not need a pathway to follow. AD felt that coaches needed to be involved with the setting up of pathways and CA said she had previously discussed this and the coaching feedback was that there was not sufficient support.

Supporting Officials – CJ confirmed that there had been an Officials Conference held on Sunday last. PC thanked EA for their continued support regarding this. There had also been an Endurance Officials meeting recently and the Endurance Handbook would be available soon.

CJ confirmed work was taking place with athletics networks on funding and from 1<sup>st</sup> April there would be a new process where they would have to apply for funding. It was imperative therefore that networks and counties work closely together. The four local teams would manage this.

PC referred to risk assessment saying that although competition providers should check the venues have carried out a risk assessment, this was not always done. CJ suggested that AD discuss with Michael Hunt (Health & Safety Officer) for further guidance. **Action: AD (& Michael Hunt)**

Discussion then took place regarding network funding. TP stated that it was not clear in South London if there was a dedicated pot of money for the network to keep going. The network needs assurance they can keep the administration going. DR reported that Kent network lost their funding and therefore stopped employing someone to do the administration but he felt it made little difference as some volunteers tended to do this now. DS reported on a change of personnel at Essex hopefully resulting in better relationships, working closer with networks.

CJ confirmed, moving forward, that there would be a pot of funding locally that could be used to support club development and this may need a person to co-ordinate any activity. He also stated that EA were continually reviewing their own structure as EA now have less for core sport activities. RM felt that many people think that the money EA receive from the Government has 'no strings attached' – they are not aware of the restrictions EA face with regards to the funding received.

CJ also confirmed that we would be no longer working with Sportshall and Quad Kids from the end of March 2013. He reported that as part of the outcomes of the Affiliation meetings there would be a Spring period of consultation, including liaising with National Council (a meeting scheduled next week).

It was agreed that after the typing amendment (stated in first paragraph) the notes of the last meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2013, were accepted as a true record.

### **UKA Update**

CA reported that with regards to Officials, a technical advisory group had been set up of approximately 20 volunteers. She confirmed the following list was what UKA would be investing in as part of their four year strategy:-

- Communication
- Development of Officials
- Counties and Home Countries interface
- Social Media
- Trinity
- Development – getting more Assessors trained
- Exchange of strategic development on the international scene
- Competition regulations
- Course management strategy
- Course maker
- Mentor programme
- Tutor training
- Governance
- Budget Setting
- DBS (Disclosure)
- Home Countries State of Nation
- Licensing

- Role of official secretaries
- Rules
- International rules
- Officiating at UK Competitions
- Selections
- Timetabling
- Recruitment, Retention & Recognition

Discussion took place regarding officials. RM said he would like people graded and veer away from volunteers. At the moment parents officiated Quadkids at RM's club (no-one ever refused) and last year six took grades. AD also confirmed that most of the people involved in his club were parents.

CA went on to say that athletes want well-run meetings and she confirmed that UKA were there to help and support the counties by getting behind them to promote the County Champs. She stated that we needed to build up the County Champs before actually working on the pathway. CEU had been offered £14,000 to support the August competition. JS confirmed that this year's County Champs had been a big problem for the Greater Manchester area because of the Nova events taking place at the same time. CA suggested JS discuss with her outside of the meeting.

**Action: CA/JS**

Discussion took place about the difficulty of dates for the various Champs in 2014. CA stated that much feedback had been received requesting that early May was no longer required. She said the bigger picture needed to be looked at when planning, not just County Champs. AD stated that although first week in September had been agreed for English Champs age group Championships, this would be reviewed for future years. DS said that schools in Essex definitely wanted a May date for the County Champs.

CA stated that we need to promote the Area Champs to athletes and RM felt if we could promote the County Champs with connection to the Area Champs, that would be good. CA felt that county websites need to be uniform on their websites when promoting. DR said that coaches were critical to where the athletes go as much as the club can encourage them. CA felt that if the quality of competition was there, the coaches would come. RM reiterated the need to improve the promotion, making the County Champs, Area Champs and England Champs more connected. Also the development of the athletes' pathway towards international meetings.

CA confirmed that she had a document on the County Champs that she would send to all members present. **Action: CA**

### **EA 2013-2017 Update**

In CJ's absence AD updated members on the following:-

- Spring consultation being organised – details to be advised during the next few weeks
- 2013-17 priorities – documents coming out for public view (website) to summarise focus
- Finalising area competitions agreements

- Sport England has major say to how we are funded (87% of our funding) and how we must deliver the objectives
- £8m from the total WSP to be used for Running – many challenges
- Commonwealth Games – standards agreed, announcement to be made in next few weeks
- Funding for area competition and some support for counties
- Funding for ESAA but no more schools investment locally – local system needs to work with school associates, clubs etc

### **Online Entry System**

AD confirmed that the programmes had been re-written and had been trialled with Midland, Welsh and English Champs, plus RM. RM had brought back many questions relating to the trial. AD now proposed training should be available, hopefully in February before the Age Group Champs. He confirmed he would run through the system outside the meeting. Five counties had been willing to be 'guinea pigs' and after some discussion AD confirmed that if any county already had a system in place they could choose not to use this one, just to carry on with their own. However, this system would not cost the county anything, so would obviously be cheaper to use. AD also stated that there were 'no strings attached' as he could see it at the moment.

After some discussion it was agreed that AD and RM would meet to take this forward and AD confirmed that he would invite members for training (if they wanted to take part) by weekending 15<sup>th</sup> Feb. **Action: AD**

### **CAU Update**

RM reported in his capacity as Secretary of the CAU he did not actually have a brief to work with counties although the management had agreed for him to. He reported that only one third of clubs had EDM (Electronic Distance Measuring) equipment and even fewer had photo-finish to support the results. He said some clubs were too small to justify having this equipment. Some members stated that they needed technical training for this equipment.

RM said he had received requests for counties to check if members are affiliated as some could not do this. He confirmed that Bulk Checker could not do it also. So there had been some issues as they only wanted to know if someone was affiliated. He would follow up getting a clear statement of policy that he felt was required. **Action: RM** AD suggested that modification of the Bulk Checker was happening as we go, for ease of use.

RM felt it was in all our interests to find out who had not paid their affiliation and he felt that the system support was not good enough. AD felt that the more we use the system the more any issues could be ironed out.

### **County Funding**

AD reported that because there was not a separate Senior Championships this year, the funding from this was available. He asked members if there was anything extra that was required for the competitions. Not many could suggest anything except RM suggested bib numbers, pin, paper-work for any counties that do not have sufficient money. AD confirmed the money amounted to £30,000 over 40 competitions

(approx £750 per comp). After discussion it was agreed that the aim would be improve the standard of the meeting. One idea was to subsidise the entries (proof maybe required from winners) but bib numbers would be a good idea (sponsored by EA) – may be best bought in bulk. AD agreed to look at purchasing bib numbers.

**Action: AD**

### **Regional Councils and Counties Working Together**

RM had a concern that there was no connection between Councils and Counties although he understood that some were better than others. As a Regional Councillor himself, MW disagreed, but confirmed that Regional Councils would be following a new brief going forward. CG felt that members here today were not in a position today to discuss the Councils. A brief discussion took place.

MW confirmed that Regional Councils do invite County Chairs and Sports Partnerships occasionally.

### **Any Other Business**

- Suggestion by RM to have a free affiliation category for County associations which would enable everyone to receive EA communication – AD to investigate **Action: AD**