

ENGLAND ATHLETICS BOARD MEETING OUTCOMES

Thursday 29th May 2025

London and Teams

Present:

Gary Shaughnessy, Board Chair (GS)
Lorna Boothe (LB), via Teams
Jim Buckle (JB), via Teams
Matthew Dalton (MD)
Adrian Day (AD)
Connie Henry (CH) (from item 5.1)
Janyce Holmes (JH)
Chris Jones (CJ)
Marilyn Okoro (MO) (from item 5.2)
Clive Poyner (CP)

In attendance

Gabriel Akin-Odujobi, Board Observer (GA)
Sarah Benson, Talent & Performance Director (SB)
Gemma Gillespie, Head of Finance (GG)
Dan Isherwood, Operations Director (DI)
Sam O'Shea, Board & NED Secretary (SO)

Part attendance

Ed Hunt, Facilities Manager, (Item 6 only), via Teams (EH)
Gill Jones, HR & People Development Manager, (Item 8a only), via Teams (GJ)
Darren Ritchie, Group Lead - Jumps & Combined Events (Item 13), via Teams (DR)
Nick Ridgeon, Event Group Lead - Throws (Item 13 only), via Teams (NR)

Apologies

Adetunji Akintokun, SID
Emma Davenport, Clubs & Development Director
Helen Kendall

1. Welcome and apologies

Apologies were noted. AD was welcomed to his first meeting.

2. Declarations of interest

There were none.

3. Draft minutes of the previous meeting

Resolved and Actions:

- The Board agreed the minutes were a true reflection of the meeting.

4. Actions/matters arising

The Board discussed the outstanding actions and noted those to be closed.

5. Dashboard and CEO report

- 5.1 CJ stressed that it was important to consider the capacity of the organisation, be disciplined about new projects and if necessary, identify what activity can be stopped.

Connie Henry joined the meeting.

5.2 Dashboard

- DI reported the positive affiliation numbers.
- The Board was pleased to note the higher than average net promoter score.

Marilyn Okoro joined the meeting.

5.3 Age group changes

5.3.1 English Schools AA

CJ summarised the background and the current position of ESAA taking the decision not to adopt the new age groups on 1 April 2026. EA will continue to work with them and if there is no change to their decision, it will need to be communicated to the sport. The Board discussed the ESAA decision and the impact on competition.

5.3.2 Indoor Champs 2026

Following consultation with Regional Councils, England Council and other key stakeholders, a recommendation was brought to the Board which would balance athlete development needs with the practical and operational realities of the transition period. Some additional feedback had since come to light and therefore the Board agreed to defer any decision until the views of England Council had again been sought. SB will also carry out an additional layer of consultation over the next month to sense check the recommendation.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) The Board agreed that as additional feedback from the sport had recently been received, the Board and England Council should consider this in making the decision relating to the 2026 Indoor Champs.**

5.3.3 Track & Field

The Board noted the Vision Group meeting and Track & Field research (The Future of Athletics).

Ed Hunt joined the meeting

6. Focussed discussion topic: Facilities Strategy

The current Facilities Strategy expires this year, and the paper included a proposed roadmap for the 2025-32 strategy. EH summarised the challenges and opportunities within our clubs' facilities.

Ed Hunt left the meeting

7. Welfare & Compliance: Club Standard 6

All clubs wishing to affiliate for the 25/26 year have actively engaged with EA regarding Club Standard 6 and this result has been mainly due to the engagement work carried out by CSMs and councils. 34 clubs do not currently meet the standard, but we are confident they will get there, and 88% of clubs are already compliant for all 7 standards (mandatory from 2026).

Gill Jones joined the meeting

8. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

CJ provided an update on key Equality, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives. The Board was asked to provide feedback on the updated Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) which will be further reviewed once the new EDI Manager has been appointed.

A suggestion was made that we should also collect data on our club leaders. CJ commented that we may already hold a significant amount of data within the portal.

8a. EDI Policies

- ED&I Policy (employee)
- Inclusion Policy (external)

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) The Board was content with the Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan pending a further review by the new EDI Manager.**
- 2.) The Board approved the two ED&I Policies and noted that a signpost to UKA transgender policy would be added once the guidance has been finalised.**

Gill Jones left the meeting

9. Kukri partnership

The existing agreement with Kukri is due to expire on March 31st 2026. CJ updated the Board on the tender process and the recommendation to

reappoint Kukri Sports. Kukri continues to have strong sustainability credentials.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) The Board gave approval to the executive to conclude the agreement with Kukri on the partnership renewal.

10. Audit & Assurance Committee

Treasury Management & Investment Policy

The Board noted the minor updates to the policy.

AI Policy

The Board noted the new policy.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) The Board approved the updated Treasury Management & Investment Policy.
- 2.) The Board approved the new Generative AI Acceptable Use Policy.
- 3.) The Board also delegated future approvals of the AI Policy to the Audit & Assurance Committee (as per the other IT Policies).

11. Governance Committee

SO explained that Governance Committee had met recently and have suggested that, as the Articles are very prescriptive in places, and could be freed up whilst still aligning with Sport England's Code for Sports Governance. The Committee will review the Articles in early 2026.

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) The Board approved Governance Committee's recommendation to review the Articles during 2026.

12. Nominations & Remunerations Committee

- SERC role
- Board Recruitment & Succession Policy

Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) The Board noted that Adrian Day is the new EA representative on SERC.
- 2.) The Board approved the Board Recruitment & Succession Policy

Darren Ritchie and Nick Ridgeon joined the meeting

13. Field Events Task & Finish Group

As requested by the Board in September 2024 a Track & Finish Group was formed to explore ways to reverse the declining trend of field events at major championships. The consultation and review phase have now been

completed. DR and NR shared some slides which included a summary of the timeline, analysis and opportunities. The three webinars have provided some useful data on the key challenges and emerging themes.

The top 3 priorities identified are:

1. Coach education and development (strengthen pathways)
2. Clubs and grassroots (expand, diversify and upskill)
3. Talent & performance (grow and specialise the talent hub network)

CJ commented that any cross-cutting actions that aren't specific to just field events will be connected to the EA strategy and the wider Track & Field review.

Darren Ritchie and Nick Ridgeon left the meeting

14. Finance report

GG highlighted some key points from the paper circulated which provided an update on the 2024-25 financial performance, and a look forward to 2025-26. Early stages of audit and are on track. 25-26 numbers are positive.

15. International Teams update

The paper provided an update on the current funding arrangements for UK Athletics international teams and outlined how England Athletics is actively supporting English athletes who are selected for GB & NI international teams that do not currently receive UKA funding.

16. AOB

None

SECTION 2

Topics discussed/agreed outside of the main meetings.

Any information was initially recorded on the agenda for the Board's information.

Ratification following council elections

On 24th April a paper was circulated to the Board (with the exception of Matthew Dalton) requesting ratification following the council elections and the recommendations from the 23rd April England Council meeting.

The Board ratified:

1. Regional Council Chairs, noting the two new chairs for the North East and East Midlands.
2. England Council Chair: Matthew Dalton
3. England Council nominated Board Directors Matthew Dalton and Adrian Day.