

ENGLAND COUNCIL (EC) MEETING OUTCOMES

Wednesday 23rd April 2025

Crawley and via Teams

Present:

Matthew Dalton, Chair, (East) (MD)
Jon Clarke, (Northwest), via Teams (JC) (from item 8)
Lynn Cooper, (North East), via Teams (LC)
Paul D'Arcy, (South West), via Teams (PD)
Adrian Day, (London), via Teams, (AD)
James de Vivenot, (South East) (JdV)
Ian Martin, (Yorks & Humberside) (Items 1 to 14) (IM)
Stuart Paul, (West Midlands), via Teams (SP)
Gary Shaughnessy, Board Chair (GS)
Terry Timmis (East Midlands – Vice Chair), via Teams (TT)

In attendance:

Emma Davenport, Clubs & Development Director (ED)
Kirsty Fardell, CSM (KF)
Chris Jones, CEO (Items 1 to 10) (CJ)
Dan Isherwood, Operations Director, via Teams (DI)
Sam O'Shea, Board Secretary, via Teams (SO)
Megan Weir, Club Support Administrator. Meeting observer. Via Teams

Part Attendance

Sarah Benson, Talent & Performance Director (Items 10 to 14), via Teams (SB)

External Attendee

Dean Hardman, (Item 10 only), via Teams (DH)

Apologies:

Gemma Gillespie, Head of Finance

MD welcomed the new North East Chair, Lynn Cooper, and the East Midlands Vice Chair, Terry Timmis (who will be a regular attendee on behalf of the Chair Neil Dawson).

1. Elect England Council Chair

*MD and AD left the meeting.
GS chaired this item.*

Only one nomination for England Council Chair had been received, from Matthew Dalton, Chair of the East.

Resolved and Actions:

1.) EC unanimously approved Matthew Dalton to continue as England Council Chair for a further two-year term.

2. Nominate two representatives to join the Board

GS chaired this item.

Two nominations had been received for the EC nominated Board Director positions: from Matthew Dalton, Chair of the East and Adrian Day, Chair of London.

Resolved and Actions:

1.) EC unanimously approved Matthew Dalton to continue in the post of one of the EC nominated Board Directors.

2.) EC unanimously approved Adrian Day as one of the EC nominated Board Directors.

MD and AD re-joined the meeting.

GS confirmed EC's decisions relating to items 1 and 2 and handed over the chair to MD.

3. Welcome and Apologies

4. Declarations of interest

There were none.

5. Draft minutes of the previous meeting (March)

Resolved and Actions:

1.) EC agreed the minutes were a true reflection of the previous meeting.

6. Actions/matters arising

Resolved and Actions:

1.) EC noted the outstanding actions and the closed actions.

7. EC Chair's Report

MD highlighted the main points from the paper. MD and GS were in the process of planning the joint Board and EC session at the end of May.

8. Board Chair's report

JC joined the meeting during this item.

GS shared some slides with the overall theme of 'Changing Times'. As this topic will be discussed at the Board and EC session in May, GS asked for comments from EC.

A discussion took place, and the following topics were considered:

- Relationships
- Structure of the sport
- Brand
- Innovation

9. Dashboard and CEO report

9.1 CJ summarised some key points from the report:

- The Operational Plan & Budget 25-26 was approved at the March Board meeting and a summary will be provided for council in the next month.
- Affiliation numbers at the end of the year were positive compared to this time last year .
- We have commissioned a Field Task & Finish group, led by Clive Poyner, and clear recommendations will be reported to the Board in May.
- Two induction sessions are planned for council in the next two weeks.

9.2 Welfare & Safety: Club Standard 6. ED updated the group on progress. The CSM team is tracking this daily and and RC chairs will be informed of the outstanding clubs followed by an update to the July EC meeting. ED thanked RC Chairs for their support.

9.3 DI updated the group on RUN:EA. Additional planned investment has been allocated for marketing and the EA stall at the London Marathon Expo at the weekend will continue to raise awareness.

9.4 Sustainability Strategy

CJ informed the group that the sustainability strategy is due to be updated and he asked for expressions of interest from a RC Chair to contribute to the updated strategy.

Secretary postscript: Adrian Day volunteered on behalf of England Council.

Dean Hardman and SB joined the meeting.

10. Update on the Track and Field review / external research:

10.1 Indoor champs - Feb and March 2026

Although the age group changes have already been approved by UKA, Board and Council views were asked with regard to the Indoors 2026 and whether the new age groups could be brought in earlier, as pilots, to aid athlete transition. This topic was initially discussed at the 5th March England Council meeting and the whole council call on 14th April.

SB reminded EC of the challenge for technical events transitioning in and out of the new age groups. DH summarised the feedback received and the options, including the benefits and risks of each.

A vote took place and Option 1- to stay with the plan already communicated - was the preferred route for the majority of EC.

10.2 Rulebook update

The UKA Rules Group will be debating the proposed changes, and the draft revised Rulebook will be presented to the UKA Board in the summer.

10.3 U10 & U12 competition piloting

The age group changes have provided a clearer delineation between primary and secondary school children, which provides the opportunity to give the best provision.

Funetics Multi Challenge is being piloted, and the aim is to make these competitions easy to run and enjoyable to participate in. CJ added that this will be EA's preferred outdoor offer for the younger age groups and Sportshall will be the preferred indoor offer.

10.4 Partner responses

English Schools have yet to confirm their decision.

10.5 Whole sport wider comms

Regular blogs and updates have been published. The two major milestones (English Schools and the Rulebook) will be communicated over the next few months, and the wider plan will be presented at the England champs. The

age group change will be embedded in as many communications as possible along with face-to-face conversations to ensure that people are well informed.

10.6 Track & Field review

We have been reviewing our T&F offer to understand what would create a vibrant and exciting sport, to address teen drop out. We have obtained views from current athletes, lapsed athletes and those that have never participated. The outcomes will form part of the overall vision. A request was made to have the outcomes in time to share at the autumn regional forums. DH agreed this timing would work.

Resolved and Actions:

1.) Indoors 2026: EC recommended Option 1 to stay with the 1st April date, as already communicated, for Board consideration.

- **A clear plan for supporting the athletes affected should be developed.**

CJ and DH left the meeting

11. Focused discussion topic: The payment of officials & coaches

MD explained that a number of clubs had taken the decision to pay their coaches and officials. The group discussed the positives and negatives of this club structure.

12. IT systems - verbal update

DI updated EC on the system improvements that have been carried out to enable the best performance at the start of the affiliation year when volume of activity on the portal peaks. As a result, there have been very few data issues. The Customer Services team have been taking all system queries, and the customer satisfaction score is currently over 75%.

13. Finance – verbal update

Work is being carried with regard to year end and the annual audit processes. Year End figures will be reported to Board and DI offered to share these with EC afterwards.

14. Skills matrix

The draft Matrix had been updated to include two new proposed categories – equality, diversity & inclusion and ESG/sustainability. The completed matrix will be brought back to EC for review. MD explained that the skills matrix highlights any gaps where co-option may be the solution.

Resolved and Actions:

1.) England Council approved the two new categories:

- **Equality Diversity & Inclusion**
- **ESG/Sustainability**

2.) England Council agreed that this template should also be used for Regional Councils.

SB and IM left the meeting

15. EC Diversity Lead

This role was discussed at the March EC meeting as the existing EC Diversity Lead had stepped down after serving the maximum co-opted term. SO confirmed that the postholder could be an EC member, an individual co-opted directly onto EC or be co-opted onto EC from RC. EC agreed that the appointee should be someone with passion to develop diversity and add real value. RC Chairs will discuss with their councils and bring back expressions of interest.

16. AOB

16.1 Miscellaneous regional council roles

SO listed the various roles that can form part of a regional council and who can hold these positions.

16.2 Regional Forums

ED provided an update and confirmed the expecting timing for the forums and awards evenings.