

## ENGLAND ATHLETICS BOARD MEETING OUTCOMES

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

London & Teams

### **Present:** (*Quorum is 5*)

Gary Shaughnessy, Board Chair (GS)  
Adetunji Akintokun, SID (AA)  
Connie Henry (CH), via Teams  
Lorna Boothe (LB)  
Jim Buckle (JB), via Teams  
Matthew Dalton (MD)  
Adrian Day (AD) (until 3:30pm)  
Janyce Holmes (JH) via Teams  
Chris Jones (CJ)  
Helen Kendall (HK)  
Clive Poyner (CP)

### **In attendance**

Gabriel Akin-Odujobi, Board Observer (GA)  
Sarah Benson, Talent & Performance Director, (SB) via Teams (Items 1 to 14)  
David Bull, Head of Commercial Partnerships (DB) (Items 1 to 14)  
Emma Davenport, Clubs & Development Director (ED) (Items 1 to 14)  
Gemma Gillespie, Head of Finance (GG), via Teams (Items 1 to 14)  
Dan Isherwood, Operations Director (DI) (Items 1 to 14)  
Jon Mulkeen, Board Observer (JM)  
Sam O'Shea, Board & NED Secretary (SO)

### **Part attendance**

Chris Mallender, Head of Workforce (CM) (Item 5), via Teams  
Emily Oliver, Head of Marketing & Comms (EO) (Item 8)

### **Apologies**

None

#### **1. Welcome and apologies**

GS welcomed JM to his first meeting as Board Observer.

##### **1.1 Gabriel Akin-Odujobi – end of year 1**

GS confirmed that GA's 2<sup>nd</sup> year has been approved by the Board.

#### **2. Declarations of interest**

CJ declared that he has been appointed onto the Board of the NGB Coalition.

### **3. Draft minutes of the previous meetings**

#### **Resolved and Actions:**

**1.) The Board agreed the minutes were a true reflection of the meeting.**

### **4. Actions/matters arising**

- 4.1 ESAA, age groups and health & Safety [CJ]: SB and colleagues have engaged with ESAA and UKA H&S staff regarding the risk assessment required for their championships. The licence will be granted on the basis that ESAA take responsibility for all areas outside licensing remit, including County Schools events. In addition to ongoing ESAA communications, EA will host a webinar to support County Schools competition providers with the event formats in 2026 and provide broader competition clarification.
- 4.2 Write to UKA re service delivery [GS]: GS has had an initial discussion, and a follow up discussion is scheduled.
- 4.3 The Board noted the later actions and those that were to be closed.

### **5. CEO and Dashboard**

- 5.1 CJ announced that SO would be leaving her role as Board Secretary and moving to take the administrator role at Personal Best Foundation. (GS and N&R Committee were informed via email earlier in the week).

*Chris Mallender joined the meeting.*

- 5.2 Learning Management System. CM updated the Board on progress and the improvements that this will bring to the coach and official pathway.

*Chris Mallender left the meeting.*

- 5.3 Membership Task & Finish Group / RUN:EA update  
DI confirmed that the product was progressing well with new members and with renewals. In time additional data will help us to understand how many RUN:EA members have in fact joined a club.
- 5.4 CJ updated the Board on some other key areas of work including facilities and associated funding from Sport England. It was the right time to explore funding opportunities to create a combined, sustainable funding route for facilities in England. He has also discussed this challenge with UKA/HCAFs and with London Marathon so far.

**6. Finance report**

GG provided a summary of the regular Board report circulated.

**7. Operational Plan & Budget**

7.1 The Operational Plan and Budget had been previously reviewed by Audit & Assurance Committee. The Board provided feedback.

7.2 Commercial strategy and pipeline

DB presented slides summarising his observations, challenges and opportunities since taking the role of Head of Commercial Partnerships and updated the Board on the strategic ambition.

CJ reported that a new commercial group will be set up.

**Resolved and Actions:**

**1.) The Board approved the Operational Plan and Budget including the specific items of expenditure.**

*Emily Oliver joined the meeting .*

**8. Focussed discussion topic: Marketing, Comms and engagement**

8.1 EO shared slides which detailed the 26/27 Marcomms plan which has a large focus on club engagement and storytelling. Another key area for 26-27 is our brand story and RunTogether, funetics, RUN:EA and PBF will also be reviewed as part of the brand refresh.

*Emily Oliver left the meeting*

8.2 Board engagement: The Board discussed the engagement matrix and also their links with regional councils.

**Resolved and Actions:**

**1.) The Board was supportive of the marketing strategy and provided their feedback.**

**9. Internal evaluations**

The Board reviewed the recent internal evaluations for the Board (annual) and England Council (biennial). They noted that the Committees were due to be evaluated in 2026/27 (biennial).

**10. Risk Register and Heat Map**

DI summarised the risk register and heat map.

**Resolved and Actions:**

**1.) The Board endorsed the risk register and heat map and provided feedback.**

## 11. Nominations & Remuneration Committee

JH introduced the topics for approval and for information.

- NED recruitment
- Board Welfare & Safety role description
- Board Recruitment & Succession Policy: this was shared with the Board for approval.
- Board Succession Plan
- GS reported that JB's 2nd term had been approved by the Board via email and this was subject to confirmation at the AGM.

### Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) The Board approved the recommendation to commence the NED recruitment for 2 roles (finance and commercial).
- 2.) The Board approved the Board Welfare & Safety Lead role description.
- 3.) The Board approved the Board Recruitment and Succession Policy.

## 12. Sustainability strategy update

JH introduced the paper provided by Ellie Wardell, Sustainability Manager. DI confirmed the baseline had been established along with clear goals to educate and influence. Good progress was being made on carbon reporting. He added that there were plans to recruit an intern in this area. JH confirmed that an updated on the strategy would be brought to the Board in the summer.

### Resolved and Actions:

- 1.) The Board noted the sustainability progress and next steps.

## 13. AOB

Club standards [HK]: HK congratulated ED on the excellent news that 100% of clubs had achieved the required standards.

*Chris Jones, Dan Isherwood, Emma Davenport, Sarah Benson, David Bull and Gemma Gillespie left the meeting.*

**14. Non-Executive Director only session (quarterly)**

Non-Executive directors and SO remained for the scheduled quarterly session without the Executive Team.

- 14.1 The Board discussed the skills matrix and made some suggested amendments which will be considered by the Nominations & Remuneration Committee.

*AD left the meeting during this item.*

- 14.2 The Board discussed the Member elected director role and suggested some amendments to the nomination process. This will be considered by Governance Committee.  
A comment was made that councils should also be encouraging individuals to put themselves forward. .

GS agreed that this non-executive session only note could be included in the main meeting's outcomes.