

# Minutes of the Standing Committee of Airedale Athletics

## at Idle Cricket Club, on Monday 1 June 2009

**Present from the Standing Committee:** Gordon Agar, Dave Armstrong, Simon Forde, Chris Hainsworth, Barney Lerner, Tony Myers, Rob Sutton, Peter Wade.

**Other members in attendance:** Rory Cunliffe, Colm Garvin, Helen Freeman, Janice Magennis, Jen Willingham, Stephen Wolstenholme.

**Guest representatives from Baildon Runners in observer status:** Sue Coates, Debra Kaznowski, Quentin Lewis.

**Apologies for absence:** Mick Brearley, Will Kerr, Mike Moss, Jack Verity.

The meeting started at 7.05pm.

1. Guests from Baildon Runners were welcomed to the meeting. The meeting had agreed in advance that these representatives were welcome to attend several meetings of the Standing Committee while they considered as a club whether to join the Airedale Athletics partnership, or become members of the Bradford Athletics Network independently.
2. The **Minutes** of the previous meeting on 6 April were approved.  
Helen Freeman volunteered to take minutes for this meeting.
3. **Matters Arising**, not covered below.
  - (i) SF enquired whether the matter of storage and distribution of AA vests had been fully resolved. DA reported that he believed so.

#### 4. **Bradford Athletics Network – an introduction.**

The key players in writing the successful bid have been Simon Forde and John Dennis and it was likely that a general understanding of the network within the various clubs was limited. SF provided an introductory summary of the network, the main points being as follows:

- The network covers most of the Bradford District clubs: Bingley, Ilkley Harriers, Keighley & Craven, Baildon, Bradford-Airedale, Eccleshill, Skyrac and St Bede's (the last four operating as a single cluster alongside the first three, larger clubs). Bradford Schools AA was also a participant.
- £37,650 had been awarded by England Athletics to the network, to run from Sept 2009 for the first of three years. Funding would be dependent upon annual performance as demonstrated by the network, with the bid being refreshed each year. By 2012 the network will need to be self sufficient.
- The funding recognises that athletics clubs are seen to be the driving force in athletics, with three basic objectives as the focus:
  - i. to increase participation in athletics

- ii. to improve the experience of athletes/runners (retention)
  - iii. to improve the performance of athletes/runners (whether at basic or elite standard).
- There remains much to do to develop the structures of the network. Early discussions proposed all clubs coming together under the AA umbrella, as the Standing Committee had proposed in December. However, this was rejected by the other clubs. As a result, the 15 projects that formed the basis of the bid have been divided between clubs, with a clear lead-club in place having the responsibility for delivery. AA are to lead on 7 projects, with 40% of the total funding allocated to these. The point was made that all clubs in the network were entitled to reap the benefits of all 15 project areas. Just how this co-ordination will be achieved has yet to be agreed.
  - The funding is public money. Therefore transparency is essential, as is the need to demonstrate a full accounting trail and excellent record keeping. We need to be clear about the beneficiaries of the projects, i.e. who benefits and how many, to demonstrate a sufficient outcome for the investment.
  - There will be a degree of bureaucracy involved. But SF stressed that the programme of activities needs to work for the network, rather than us being a slave to the system. SF reported that the funding will be managed via a trust within Bradford College.

BL congratulated John & Simon on the success of the bid, which clearly involved significant effort to create such an impressive bid. However, in the open discussion, two significant concerns were raised:

1. BL, SW and RS spoke about the lack of an agreed structure and constitution for the network, and particularly the lack of clarity about who would oversee the finance and the allocation of funds. BL argued forcefully that good governance arrangements had to be put in place before the network was launched. Not only could this jeopardise the correct running of the network, but could put the funding at risk. **The meeting mandated SF to press for the implementation of suitable governance arrangements** to ensure the network can and does deliver the EA objectives. *The meeting stated firmly that without satisfactory arrangements in place by 1 September, AA would not be in a position to participate in the network.*
2. SW was concerned about the lack of a Business Plan for sustainable long-term income.

#### 5. **Re-constituting the Joint Committees to undertake the network activities.**

SF gave an overview of the 15 projects that formed the bid. A document circulated to members on 26 May provided the detail. Common to all projects is a headline budget, details of anticipated project beneficiaries and 3 to 6 specific initiatives in each project. However, not all projects nor all initiatives are programmed to commence in year 1.

The four Joint Committees within AA that would be responsible for delivering the projects are:

- DARCOM – ‘Development & Recruitment’ (projects 2A to 2C: Year-round training for new athletes, incl. volunteer training; Developing community of 1000+ formerly unattached athletes; and Outreach training groups [in year 2])
- COMCOM – ‘Communications & Management’ (projects 5A and 5C: Media Communication & Online database of members)

- TAPCOM – ‘Training & Performance’ (project 4C: Enhanced experience at club-level via a Club Challenge)
- YOPCOM – ‘Youth Programmes’ (project 3C: After-school clubs and XC leagues – initially in East Bradford, then elsewhere).

Bingley, Ilkley and Keighley & Craven would be responsible, alone or together, for five of the other 8 projects. AA would also be working with K&C on project 5B (Benchmarking and a launch conference). The remaining two projects would come on-stream in later years and no responsibilities had yet been allocated.

SF invited members to form into the Joint Committees, and start drawing up a list of reps from each club. The Joint Committees should set a date for a follow-up meeting, and also nominate a chair and scribe. Each committee would then commence work on the detailed implementation of the actions for each project assigned to that Committee.

#### 6. **Any Other Business.**

SF reminded the committee of the photo opportunity at Bradford Town Hall on 4 June at 2.00pm, to publicise the Bradford Marathon & 10 miler event on 18 October. One rep from each club, wearing club kit, was needed.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.

The **next meeting** of the Standing Committee will take place on Monday, 5 October at Idle CC. In the interim, the Joint Committees will need to meet.

Helen Freeman, 2 June 2009.