

Colchester and Tendring Athletics Club

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 MARCH 2025

Present: Michelle Green, Grainne Hallahan, Rod Kendall, Warren Page, Alan Palmer, Jo Partridge, Taliesin Stevenson, Simon Styles, Kay Thompson

Apologies: Dan Partridge, Kate Sandercock

1. Welcome and introductions

Michelle Green was welcomed to her first meeting as incoming Membership Secretary, and Warren Page was welcomed back to the committee.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2025 were approved as an accurate record.

Progress with matters arising not already on the agenda was noted as follows:

- RK had asked coaches about equipment needs and nothing had been identified. However, given subsequent storage developments (see minute 6), it was agreed that each FUNDamentals coach should have a set of equipment (and potentially a trolley) to use in training. *Ongoing*
- JP had announced the winner for the summer road racing vest design competition on Facebook and obtained costs for producing the vests (see minute 10). *Complete*
- GH had issued a reminder about use of headphones at the track. One coach continued to use them and RK would raise this with them. *Ongoing*
- GH had yet to pull together a short summary of each coaching group for induction purposes. *Ongoing*
- GH was continuing to investigate sponsorship opportunities. *Ongoing*
- Keeley-Jo Swordslee had agreed to take on the second Welfare Officer role and would be coming to the next meeting. KS would be asked to liaise with her regarding training requirements. *Ongoing*
- KT had yet to add coach bio information to the website. *Ongoing*
- GH had yet to meet with AP to discuss his role and opportunities for future engagement. *Ongoing*

3. Chairperson

It was proposed that WP take on a co-chair role alongside GH until October 2025, with GH to focus on communications and WP on logistics. Members were supportive of this change and agreed to co-opt WP onto the committee.

4. Welfare and safeguarding

It was reported that KS was dealing with a welfare issue and that this was in hand.

5. DBS checks

SS reported that all DBS checks were up-to-date, apart from one coach whose license had recently expired. This would be dealt with as soon as possible.

6. Sodexo update and storage facilities

The Club had been notified by Sodexo that by 20 April, the green hut needed to be cleared for health and safety reasons. While there may be a possibility of new storage in the longer term, alternative arrangements needed to be made in the interim, and a Club member had kindly offered space in their stables in Earls Colne. It was agreed that a date should be identified in liaison with Sodexo to clear everything out, with one of the coaches having a van that could be used to transport items. KS had an inventory of equipment in the hut that could be used to identify what needed to be stored and what could be thrown away or sold. Javelins were particularly challenging to store and transport, and so it might be better to order them from the Garrison for training instead.

Action: SS to liaise with Sodexo regarding booking a time to clear the green hut

A meeting with Sodexo had been arranged for 28 March to discuss storage, also involving Colchester Harriers and the hockey club. SS had outlined priority storage needs (as a minimum the first aid kit and the iPad for the register that needed to be available at every training session).

SS reported that the site permit had been renewed for another year, with the risk assessment reviewed and revised. As part of this, it had been confirmed that committee members and coaches would act as marshals in the event of any incidents at the track. In the event of a fire, the changing rooms and toilets should be cleared and everyone should assemble on the stand. A key to both gates would be needed to ensure safe exit.

Action: RK to notify coaches of emergency procedures outlined in risk assessment.

7. Introduction to Athletics (ITA) groups

Sodexo had confirmed it was not possible to hire the track on Saturdays for the ITA course due to ratios and so it was agreed to run it at St Benedict's School instead, commencing in May with at least one Level 2 qualified coach and a coaching assistant

present. The sessions would act as a taster to identify those keen to continue with athletics. It was agreed that the Saturday sessions would be confined to the ITA course in the first instance.

Members discussed whether, for the NESS cross country league, younger siblings of Club members (age 8+) could be registered with England Athletics so they could run for the Club, subject to paying an associate non-training membership fee (c.£25). It was agreed that this required further discussion as there were both advantages and disadvantages, and it would also require a change to the constitution.

8. FUNDamentals progression and competition

GH reported that for the planned FUNDamentals competition on 19 May, athletes would rotate between 80m, 600m, long jump and shot put. The second training session would be cancelled so that a coaches meeting could take place in the clubhouse at the same time (see minute 9). The competition would be open to FUNDamentals only (c.60 athletes).

GH also wanted to get the parents / carers of older FUNDamentals athletes in for a meeting to discuss progression. The expectation was that the weekly norm should be the multi-event group (MEG) on one training night and the athlete's preferred discipline on the other training night, so they didn't specialise too soon. This might require an extra MEG coach on a Monday, but this could be kept under review. It was noted that Bob Kimber was now running an introductory middle distance group (Year 7s).

9. Coaching update

RK provided an update on developments. As agreed at the last meeting, Chris Harvey would be undertaking training to become a Level 2 middle distance coach. Justin Hubbard wanted to provide guidance to athletes on competition preparation, and it was agreed that this would be best shared via a video recording on the Club website. Justin had also acquired some used starter blocks that may be useful to the Club, subject to some repairs.

The issue regarding access to training equipment in the black hut had been resolved. There was a need for further discussion regarding use of the home straight by sprints coaches, and open conversations between coaches to agree shared use of the space were encouraged.

WP would liaise with Tony Fuller from Ipswich Harriers regarding arranging a pole vault training session. It was also agreed that club-wide relay training sessions would be held once a month during the 19:30 – 20:30 training session on Wednesdays from early April.

***Action:** WP to liaise with Tony Fuller to arrange a pole vault training session; RK to liaise with coaches regarding relay training sessions.*

Members discussed possible agenda items for the coaches meeting on 19 May, with the potential for a guest speaker if there was time.

10. Club vests

Members discussed next steps in terms of seeking approval from England Athletics for the planned new summer road racing vest design. Given the 4-6 week turnaround for ordering vests, this needed to be progressed quickly.

Action: SS to contact England Athletics regarding approval of road racing vest design

Members considered the quotes for vests and agreed on a moisture wicking vest in the mid-price range (Scimitar).

11. NESS update

Members noted that the close of season meeting would take place on 27 March, with AP in attendance (with potential additional attendees discussed). The league AGM would take place in September. TS would be unable to do the junior scoring next season.

The final race of the season was taking place that weekend, with the Club poised to do well at both junior and senior level across the entire season.

12. Track and field leagues

Members were reminded of the league meetings taking place at the Colchester track in May, one of which was being co-hosted by the Club. There was also an EMAC meeting in August that was being managed by Carey Hollick.

It was confirmed that the Club covered coach travel costs for athletes participating in the SAL with Ipswich Harriers.

In terms of use of the track for competitions, members questioned the quota implications given the recent Sodexo refusal to allow additional Saturday training sessions. It was noted that other clubs hired the facilities for much longer periods, and so it was unclear how the quota system worked. SS would raise this at the forthcoming Sodexo meeting.

13. Coach hire costs

SS reported that coach hire had now increased to £750-800 per event, with two events to be covered during the forthcoming summer season. While providing transport for events that were further afield was considered important, this was a considerable increase which required further consideration, with potential to explore options in terms of smaller vehicles.

Action: SS to continue to explore coach hire options

14. Winter season awards

It had been agreed to hold the awards ceremony at William Loveless Hall in Wivenhoe on the evening of Sunday 4 May.

Members also discussed a potential date of Friday 10 October for the summer awards night, to enable a venue to be booked in good time.

15. Poll update

Expenditure / voting decisions: February – March 2025

- 12 March: ticket prices for winter awards night – £5 per person supported by 8 committee members (0 against)
- 14 March: venue for winter awards night – 6 in support of Rugby Club Raven's Bar at a cost of £750; 3 favouring an alternative no-cost option
- 15 March: NESS senior fees to be covered by Club from Autumn 2025 – supported by 9 committee members (0 against)
- 17 March: William Loveless Hall, Wivenhoe venue hire for winter awards night of £112 plus £10 per head buffet – supported by 8 committee members (0 against)

16. Any other business

None

17. Date of next meeting

Thursday 17 April 2025, 19:30, Odd One Out

Summary of actions

- RK and WP to liaise with FUNdamentals coaches regarding set of equipment (and potentially a trolley) for each coach to use for training.
- RK to liaise with one coach regarding reasons for use of headphones at the track.
- GH to pull together a short summary of each coaching group for induction purposes.
- GH to continue to explore sponsorship opportunities.
- KS to liaise with Keeley-Jo Swordslee regarding Welfare Officer role and associated training needs.
- KT to add coach bio information to the website.
- GH to liaise with the President regarding his role and opportunities for future engagement.
- SS to liaise with Sodexo regarding booking a time to clear the green hut.

- RK to notify coaches of emergency procedures outlined in risk assessment.
- WP to liaise with Tony Fuller to arrange a pole vault training session.
- RK to liaise with coaches regarding relay training sessions.
- SS to contact England Athletics regarding approval of road racing vest design.
- SS to continue to explore coach hire options.