

## Colchester and Tendring Athletics Club

### Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 8 November 2023

#### 1. Apologies

None

#### 2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 9 November 2022 were approved as an accurate record.

#### 3. Matters arising

None

#### 4. Chairman's report

Alan Palmer provided his last report as Chairman before stepping down from the Committee, as detailed in Appendix A.

Alan was thanked for his important contribution to the work of the Committee over several years, and for his ongoing commitment to supporting the Club.

#### 5. Treasurer's report and presentation of accounts

Warren Page provided his last Treasurer's report before handing the role over to Jane Milburn and stepping down from the Committee. The Club had generated a small surplus this year. While costs had gone up by around £2500, this was offset by an increase in members and associated membership fee income. The England Athletics fee would be going up by £2 per athlete from April 2024, and registering Under 11s this year had added to costs. Coach hire was particularly expensive for attending more distant competitions, and so it was hoped that more events would be closer next season. There was a commitment to continuing to invest in equipment, for example purchase of new javelins.

These increased costs would be likely to necessitate a further membership fee increase next year, and this would be considered by the Committee.

Warren was thanked for his longstanding service to the Committee across various roles, noting that he would be continuing in his coaching role.

#### 6. Election of Committee

The following nominations were made for committee representation:

- **President:** Alan Palmer (elected by member vote)
- **Chairperson:** John Henington

Nominated by Talie Stevenson and Alan Palmer  
*Carried*

- **Secretary:** Simon Styles  
Nominated by Jep Ronoh and Jane Milburn  
*Carried*
- **Treasurer:** Jane Milburn  
Nominated by Simon Styles and Alan Palmer  
*Carried*
- **Welfare Officer:** Jep Ronoh  
Nominated by Alan Palmer and Jane Milburn  
*Carried*
- **Welfare Officer:** Chris Harvey  
Nominated by Kate Sandercock and Kay Thompson  
*Carried*
- **Membership Secretary:** Talie Stevenson  
Nominated by Alan Palmer and Jep Ronoh  
*Carried*
- **Committee member:** Kate Sandercock  
Nominated by Talie Stevenson and John Henington  
*Carried*
- **Committee member:** Kay Thompson  
Nominated by Simon Styles and Grainne Hallahan  
*Carried*
- **Committee member:** Grainne Hallahan  
Nominated by Kate Sandercock and John Henington  
*Carried*

Members were reminded that Committee meetings were held on the second Thursday of each month. Any matters could be raised with Committee members for discussion at the meetings. Anyone interested in becoming a member of the Committee were invited to speak to the Chairman or Secretary regarding this.

## 7. Members' motions

A motion from David Waterman was considered proposing exclusive use of the track by FUNdamentals (c.60 athletes) from 18:30 – 19:30 on Monday evenings, to improve the safety of younger athletes. A key challenge was avoiding young athletes getting in the way of sprinters on the bends.

The logistical challenges in accommodating all other athletes at the later session were recognised (especially with three sprints groups), and also not all coaches would be available to take a later session. A compromise position might therefore be needed that would still improve track safety. Options mooted included moving some (but not all) groups to the later session; staggering or extending session times; and limiting longer sprints on Mondays to avoid use of the bends. It was noted that the recent Club survey had highlighted support for a second Wednesday session. It was also important to brief the older athletes on looking out for the safety of younger athletes.

It was agreed that the Committee and coaches would look at options and suggest a way forward to address safety concerns.

## **8. Any other business**

### Club survey

Members were thanked for completing the survey, noting that a third of Club members had responded. There had been high levels of satisfaction across the board, with 80% satisfaction with coaching; 80% of respondents feeling they had improved over the last year; and 89% agreeing that they would recommend the Club to a friend. The feedback did highlight room for improvement in terms of communication and organisation, noting that any help with social media would be welcomed. There was also demand for more social events.

Addressing barriers to competition would be a focus for the next year, to encourage more members to represent the Club at competitions and events. To prepare athletes for competition, the mini-competitions had proved to be successful and there was demand for another one.

The Committee were still analysing the survey results and would share more information in due course.

### Sodexo update

The Secretary provided an update on key developments in relation to facilities:

- The changing rooms would be refurbished in the New Year, with portacabins available in the interim.
- The throwing cage was out of use due to damaged netting which needed replacing.
- Equipment storage was still an issue, with plans to move equipment into one of the black huts to improve security. Sodexo would be paying for this and were currently looking into options. Planning permission had not yet been secured for new storage containers.
- The defibrillator had been replaced (with a regular maintenance plan in place) and training on its use completed.

### Essex Cross Country League hosting

The Club would be co-hosting a league meeting at Hilly Fields on 16 December 2023, and Bob Kimber would welcome volunteers to help out (even if just for an hour). It was noted that an Under 11s race was included in the schedule.

### Future direction of Club and focus of Committee

The new Chairman provided a brief overview of his hopes and plans for the Club over the next few years. Promoting increased commitment to training and competition was a key priority to help strengthen the Club, noting that there were various barriers and enablers for this. It was emphasised that gaining the support and backing of parents and guardians was key to increasing the engagement of younger athletes.

### **9. Date of next meeting**

The next Annual General Meeting would be held in November 2024 (with at least 30 days' notice provided).



Hello and welcome to my last report as chairman before I step down leading the committee for the last 5 years.

I would like to start by thanking all the other volunteers at the club who dedicate their time to helping running the club for everyone. Without them, we wouldn't be where we are now, a vibrant, happy, and professionally run club that we can all be proud of.

Like I said this will be my last report as you are only supposed to do the role for two consecutive years, where I am effectively on my fifth term as I stood in as president, during lockdown for my third year with no chairman to get around the rule.

It has been a lot of hard work and dedication and would only have been possible with the great volunteer family we have had all through my chairmanship, and before that as secretary, committee member, league management, Officiating and back to parent helper where it all started.

You need not worry as your committee naturally changes hands, with many of the same faces in different roles and new voices and fresh ideas too, using their experience in their working lives as well, but for some in different roles and because of that great volunteer family you will probably not even notice it too much. Everyone give their time for free, I mustn't forget that in thanking them for the time and effort they give to the club.

As to the state of the club, I am going to start by go back to just over 6 years ago when there needed a shake up, to make it more cohesive from top to bottom in our triangle of training and expanding the base to increase its height more professionally.

The club needed to go back to its core values, and Warren and a few others including myself decided to take on the club management and hit a kind of reset and looked at fully developing the club in a way that it has become and progressed over the years and has made it the place we can see today, a place to train and encourage everyone to go out and compete for the club, to help those first nervous competitions when entering for the first time and push on those athletes returning to improve where they can and enjoy it every time you go out and run/jump/throw.

I am pleased to say, all this hard work by everyone has paid off, we have just had our most successful EAL year ever with 6 of 8 team's qualifying (top 8) for finals and the other two finishing 9<sup>th</sup> for senior women and 10<sup>th</sup> for U17 men who were quite a small team this year compared to other years, but those were a dedicated bunch and did themselves proud.

For our senior athletes and U17's there is the SAL, which we have a composite team with Ipswich harriers and after securing promotion to the top division last year after many attempts, we together finished 6<sup>th</sup> of 18 and did extremely well.

This was thanks to a high turnout and filling events to pick up the available points to finish second team of six in three of the four matches and 3 of six in the last during the summer holidays where all teams are naturally depleted and beating some much bigger squads and teams.

We hosted an SAL in May at the track, which was a lovely day, our committee and officials made sure the day was a successful one, and was a welcoming one for all those clubs attending.

For the coming year we will be trying to do the same for the EYAL and EAL to push further on and progress in the younger categories where we have an abundance of talent and numbers and will be looking for help on the day for lots of little jobs.

Last winter we won the NESS junior team league again (we have had an excellent track record over the years winning 48% of the team shields since the start back in 1995-96) and had the first full year of senior teams at every race for the first time for the whole season in many many years, in my 11 years at the club I can't remember it happening before, we are developing the club in all areas. More and more of our parents want to join us, along with people returning to athletics and progressing through the club. Our team spirit is a real positive that has shone through from the juniors to the seniors making the club a natural relaxing place for all to progress.

This winter there will be the sports hall for those under 15 to cross country (two different leagues) to indoor competitions starting ready for next summer season, we are really moving forward on all these events and pushing our athletes to bigger and greater personal achievements.

There is now part of England Athletics where clubs have to achieve various areas of excellence in running their club. I can say that we have achieved all of these. Which is a credit to everyone.

I have also got to say a big thank you to our 20 plus coaching staff, without you we wouldn't have a club, your commitment and dedication is truly inspiring, it is a real positive for the club and a big reason why I am personally so encouraged for the future of the club.

So in closing I would once again like to thank the volunteer family from years gone by, to this year and on to the next for making this club what it is. A wonderful place that we all enjoy. But, we always could do with more volunteers helping out in different areas of the club, so if you think you can help please come forward and ask/tell us what you can do (how does your professional skills help).

I leave you all in good hands, it's financially stable, it puts the health and wellbeing of our athletes at the forefront of all we do, all I can say is thanks for your support over the years past and to come, and come on the Cats.

*Alan Palmer*

Colchester and Tendring AC, Chairman