**EYAL AGM 2023 Minutes**

**Held** – 26/11/2023 at 14:15 in Bury St Edmunds and via Zoom.

**In Attendance** – Clive Poyner (Chair), Noel Moss (Committee member), Ray Gibbins (Fixtures Secretary), Anthony Cheatham (Treasurer), Norma Harris (Committee member & S&NH/HAWC), Stuart Broadhead (Committee Member & Herts Phoenix), Elaine Forrest (Proposed General Secretary & Brentwood Beagles), Matthew Dalton (East Region Chair), Natalie Jewell (Herts), Steve Lott (Harlow), Jo Day (Havering), Colleen Fuller (Ipswich), Hayley Bestley (Ipswich), Wendy Powell (St Albans), Cathy James (Thurrock), Vicky Trevor (Brentwood Beagles), Rob Smith (Havering), Elaine Larkins (Peterborough), Sarah Thomas (City of Norwich), Fran Tongue (St Albans), Kate Sandercock (Colchester and Tendering), Rick Thompson (Colchester Harriers), Jackie (Peterborough), Rob Deane (Dacorum), Sally Stevens (HAWCS), Jodi Henderson (Bedford), Mary McLoughlin (Watford), Vespa Ellis (Basildon), Tallesin S (CATs), John Bowsted (Cambridge and Coleridge), Ty Holden (Shaftesbury Barnet)

**Apologies –** Fraser Watts (West Suffolk), Steve Mitchell (Chelmsford)

1. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and briefly reflected on the success of the EYAL during the prior season and reflected on the ongoing challenges faced by clubs in the league.
2. Apologies for absence were noted.
3. The minutes of the prior year AGM were approved
4. Election of officers took place – i. Elaine Forrest was elected as general secretary (proposed Noel Moss, seconded Rick Thompson). ii. All other officers were re-elected without challenge (proposed Vicky Trevor, seconded Jo Day).
5. Treasurer report – Tony Cheatham provided an update to member clubs confirming that the EYAL held £4154.75 in the bank at the end of the season and that there had no significant transactions during the period. A question was asked regarding whether subscriptions to the league were greater than payments out and Tony confirmed that this was the case by around £600. The treasurer proposed an increase to affiliation fees of £100 per club (so fees of £150 for the forthcoming season). The increase in fees would be passed onto host clubs to assist with costs of hosting. If any host club wishes to claim they can request £100 from the treasurer. The motion to support the proposal agreed by all.
6. Fixtures secretary report – Due to technical issues this was not provided.
7. Proposals for the season – this section was led by the Chair who thanked everyone who had provided feedback on the proposals prior to the meeting. The Chair reinforced that the proposals had been put forward by the committee following feedback through the 2023 season and that no changes were also an option.
	1. The proposal to move to a 4 date calendar was approved by the majority. A discussion then took place regarding the issues that 3 or 4 clubs had with the date in July and concerning a clash with the YDL lower league fixtures. After some debate agreement was reached that those clubs concerned would discuss a best alternative date between them to ensure a fixture could go ahead. Jo Day agreed to co-ordinate and agree with Ray Gibbins the way forwards.
	2. Fixture dates were then agreed as 14th April (vote in favour of this by a majority), 5th May, 2nd June, 21st July and a final on the 8th September. All clubs interested in hosting a fixture were asked to contact Ray Gibbins.
	3. Following the discussion on dates, the league structure proposals were straightforward to enable to accommodate those in the YDL. Therefore the motion to use a 16 club seeded round robin format was agreed by the majority.
	4. Feedback from the clubs prior to the meeting was very clear that U17’s should retain a place in the EYAL fixture. Views on shortening the day were more mixed with many recognising that it can be a long day but also noting that well run days tended to make the timetable work and therefore perhaps more recognition of and agreement to stick to some of the constitution points on the number of non scorers were seen as more favourable than changing events. Therefore the majority vote was to retain the timetable as stands. Agreement was also reached that the committee would go away and consider other ways to shorten the day without losing events (for example, should non scoring numbers be reduced?)
	5. Some discussion took place around mixed relay events with several clubs voicing concerns about using single sex relay times to qualify for other events. The question was also asked regarding why the league wished to prescribe an order with feedback given by the Chair that this was in line with English schools and seen as safer when faster male runners are not running into female runners. Agreement was reached with the majority that mixed relays should be trialled this season and that they would take place at the first and third fixtures. Two relays would be held (a A and B relay) so the same number of participants, and points would be added to the team total (in the same way as officials points).
	6. Clubs were supportive of the need to have a confirmed chief officials list within four weeks of agreeing to host but agreement was reached to scrap the requirement to have confirmed back up Chief officials. Agreement was also reached that the start team must consist of one starter, one qualified marksman and one further marksman (who could be a parent helper) for the 100m and 200m sprints.
	7. All clubs were happy with the removal of a main sponsor and confirmed their understanding of the need to buy their own numbers.
8. Entry systems – Clive confirmed that he would like to move to online entry but had not found a solution to date. Several clubs highlighted better systems used by other leagues and people suggested they would be in favour of using google sheets. Sarah Thomas agreed to have a look at the viability of this and Norma Harris also agreed to support with an IT person from her club. Clubs also reiterated they would like to see a reinforcement of the rule concerning team submissions 24 hours before the event.
9. AOB – A question was asked regarding why trophies weren’t available to be handed out at the final and whether this could be avoided going forwards. Clive agreed that the intention would be for trophies to be at the final.

The meeting was concluded at 15:15.

Following the meeting a short discussion was held regarding the England Athletics age group changes expected in the 2026 and how clubs’ felt this should impact on the league. Clive asked all clubs to vote on the options – U14/U16, U12/U14/U16, U12/U14/U16, U14/U16/U18. The majority of clubs stated their preference was U12/U14/U16 although many caveated this by stating that they would not use year 5 children and the U12 age group would be year 6.