



## Minutes of Ashford Athletic Club AGM 2021

Held via Zoom  
Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021 at 1935hrs

Present:

JS – Chairperson & 21 Club members.

JS opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the 56<sup>th</sup> Annual AGM which was held via Zoom for the first time due to Covid-19 restrictions. JS asked all Committee members to identify themselves by a 'thumbs up' on their screen.

### 1. Apologies for absence:

VG Mrs S-S JH

### 2. To confirm the Minutes of the 2020 AGM

It was confirmed the 2020 AGM Minutes were on the website and had been circulated. Minutes confirmed and agreed by JS and seconded by KD.

### 3. Matters arising from the 2020 minutes:

No feedback correspondence had been received.

TH raised the fact the logo at the top of our headed paper only had the words Ashford AC and the stadium logo. It was confirmed that up to 6yrs ago we also had the quote: 'Promoting athletics in the Gateway to Europe'.

**Action:** JS confirmed it would be looked into to see if it could be put back into the letter heading.

TH also raised that he noticed there was no nomination of Treasurer. KD explained that when Cassidy's were employed as accountants, she (KD) became the Finance Assistant rather than full Treasurer which is why Treasurer was removed. SW (Cassidy's) agreed he felt there was no requirement to name a Treasurer as, if the club when into liquidation, it was clear that Cassidy's would be answerable to the liquidator. TH still felt that if KD was acting as Finance Assistant then it should be noted. SW stated he felt all the while KD was happy to do the role she is doing without the title, there was no need for the term Treasurer to be used, however, if someone else took over the role in the future, they may wish to be named as Treasurer.

### 4. To receive reports:

#### • Chairs report:

*Ashford AC 2020, a year of no track competitions, training session's presentation evenings or social get togethers. Who would ever have thought this was going to be the way ahead for not just for us a club but for the whole of UKA and world athletics.*

*We made the decision way back in April to cancel our annual 10k road race, which usually runs in October of every year. Fortunately, our sponsors Givauden still kindly donated their £11,000 towards our club funds; Thankyou Givauden for this generous gift, in light of the Pandemic Givauden suggested maybe we could possibly help other charities, who were struggling at this time. As a committee, we decided to donate some of this money to Kent Action for Blind who were coming on*



*board with the 10k for last year to promote their 100 years of existence. They even designed the medals with 100 years noted on them.*

*We are hoping in 2021 they will be joining us for this year's 10k. Date in diary already so let us watch this space, to see what the year holds.*

*Two other charities we donated to were 'Rising sun Domestic Abuse Charity' who help children affected by domestic abuse. In addition, we gave a donation to the Ashford Pilgrims Hospice.*

*March 2020 and the UK being put into national lockdown, and all of us thrown into a world of an unknown future. However, it did not stop us as AAC everyone changed his or her whole ethos of coaching their athletes, thinking quickly but effectively outside the box.*

*Firstly, we had numerous pictures sent through of how you were all individually keeping yourselves fit during Lockdown, adapting resources available in your own homes and gardens. Coaches organising training programmes to suite all athletes, training schedules via Zoom meetings, this was all new to everyone the new norm lots of new ideas proving positive and effective.*

*I would like to thank the Committee again this year for their tireless time and commitment and to welcome PM to the committee and thank DL, LS-R, DH, and MT who stepped down from committee. DH has also stepped down from the 10k Committee due to work commitments, however, will be assisting in the background.*

*In addition, an even greater commitment this year from all on the Exec committee, with everyone giving up their time and attending fortnightly meetings during the 10 months of the Pandemic just to stay on top of the ever changing UK Athletic Guidelines,*

*Moreover, a special Thank you to DP who like SB and myself took on a new role as UK Athletics club 'Covid 'officers. DP especially who has held the role of negotiating coaching sessions, with coaches to athletes ratios which were changing all the time and the ever changing UK safety guidelines. Thank you DP, I know that every step of the way was exhausting at times circumstances just being thrown at us. Very challenging at times but DP Thank you.*

*I think it's worth noting that we all still hold down full time job roles and that we are all volunteers in all sectors of the roles in the club which in itself is also challenging and can make a big impact on everyone's personal lives at times and I think as a club we need to be mindful of this.*

*Thank you to everyone involved in the running of AAC. In addition, everyone that has given their continued support in making the club the great club that it is and to all coaches for their weekly Risk Assessments, which again were forever changing.*

*We also introduced our new online Bacs banking system for Membership and weekly sessions coaching payments. Which has been a great success. Kate will talk about this later.*

*I would also like to extend our warm welcome to everyone at Freedom Leisure.*

*Freedom Leisure took over the running of the stadium in September only a few months ago and we are looking forward to a positive future working relationship.*

*And most importantly for everyone's patience, commitment and hard work throughout these challenging times. Its been a steady path to where we were March last year to where we are now and its down to your expertise in this pandemic - challenge that everyone has pulled together and adapted accordingly and you should all be very proud of yourselves. Thankyou*



*Before we move on to everyone's reports. I would like to send our heartfelt condolences to a long serving member of the club who passed away early last year. MD who was elected to the committee in 2005 as AAC welfare officer. MD was also a sprints coach for many years and along with DF was successful in gaining AAC with the Sport club mart award. M was also a KCAA and SEAA Track Official /Referee As well as a UK Official and TV Official she also attended the 2012 London Olympics and was involved in organising our 10k annual race event. These were just a few of her assets involved with AAC. Her daughter F and son R were committed AAC Athletes.*

*Also during 2020, we lost two other long serving members of the club;*

*MC father of P and wife to M. P was an Ashford AC athlete way back and M and M were active parents in the running of the club. In addition, Michelle Palmer, who was a good friend of JR and a part of the Julie Rose Memorial fund committee fighting for Ashford AC to have a track back in the 1990's.*

- **Treasurers Report:**

SW from Cassidy's stated there was not much to add to the Chair Person's report. Income was impacted due to Covid and lack of being able to meet. Expenses were largely donations to charities, administration expenses and website fees. Without the 10K donation, the club would be in a significantly worse situation. Overall, the figures do show having solid reserves means we can continue as we are going. All the while we have good reserves, it will be sensible not to rely on sponsors in case the 10k race does not take place. SW (Cassidy's) showed that we have only lost £1,300 this year due to the lack of activity, which is to be applauded. There were no questions. TH signed off the financial report and KD seconded.

- **Race Walking Report:**

Team Managers would usually do reports, however, due to only virtual walking races and no league matches, only CH, Race Walking Team Manager gave a report.

*"The mainly young race walking squad have coped well with the challenges of 2020. They have trained on their own when group training was not feasible and all made good progress.*

*At the beginning of the year MM won the Southern U20 champs for 10km road walk while JB was 5th in the Senior event. By the end of 2020 M ranked 1st in the UK rankings and Jacqueline 3rd in the U23. In fact, 10km was the most frequently raced distance over the year.*

*The English Schools held virtual races/time trials in lieu of their annual championships and GW was 4<sup>th</sup> and JW 5th in the Intermediate age group while RH was 4th in the Senior and M 1st.*

*The Southend Mile, another virtual race with competitors from far and wide, saw J and M came 2nd and 3rd while JH won the Senior men's event.*

*Master CH (M65) won silver in the European Masters Championship in Madeira in the Autumn.*

*At the other end of the scale, while the KYDL race walking events have been recognised as a launch pad for many international race walkers, it will be supported again and U13/15 boys and girls are offered coaching should they want to give it a go when we return to competition.*



*Race walkers are a tough lot but special note must go to LH who was attacked and hospitalised while training in Ashford that prevented any pre-lockdown racing. This was followed in the Summer by another serious foot injury. Ever resilient she has resumed her training and we wish her well.'*

#### **5. Changes to Rules – Membership, Subs & Training Fees:**

Just started with the new website and membership system in March then the Club went into lockdown so KD & DN spend the entire lockdown working out the glitches to ensure they could take training fees via the website and this is now up and running. No changes have been made to membership levels, just a few changes in wording. The subscriptions are staying the same and are now all payable online, so when they renew they pay up immediately. Members have 1 calendar month to pay and there is still the early payment £5 discount. Because of lockdown, the Committee are not sure when will start collecting subs, we will have to play by ear.

There are 3 levels of new membership, whole for athletes joining between January 1<sup>st</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> June, half for those joining between 1<sup>st</sup> July & 31<sup>st</sup> October & quarter for those joining between 1<sup>st</sup> November & 31<sup>st</sup> December. Training fees are collected online as due to Covid-19 we have been advised not to take cash. Online payment has worked very well so far and is much easier and more professional. KD explained the subscriptions and prices.

TH asked whether we are expecting athletes to renew now as we are still in lockdown. KD said she has not opened up the renewing system yet, she has to wait to hear the guidelines and this will be discussed at the next committee meeting. Trying to be as fair as possible, but we still have track fees to pay if athletes go back.

#### **6. Election of Officers:**

President: MS

Life Vice Presidents: DF, TH, H, MS, CR.

Vice Presidents: D & J R, Mrs L S-S, VG, JH, RF, JH, PW.

All have been contacted and have agreed they wish to stay on.

JS proposed, JM seconded

Support Team were proposed en-block.

KD mentioned that new members were always welcome in the Support Team, 10K committee, Fund Raising and Meeting Managers. It is hoped members will fill vacant spaces as and when the club gets back to normal.

JS mentioned that AOB should not happen at an AGM however TH wished to put forward a proposal which would be discussed by Exec Committee at next meeting as it had not been received in time. TH stated he had submitted the proposal to DP in time, however, it was brought to the AGM's attention that an incorrect email address was used so it was not received by DP.

TH stated he has looked at the accounts for last 4 yrs, and the accounts are doing well. TH proposed we deposit £30,000 into a new account with the idea of getting a club house at the stadium as soon as we can. He stated he is prepared to set up a group of people not more than 5 to see this project



through. TH felt if we can go to Lottery fund, charities etc with an account of £30,000 we stand a better chance of getting additional funding. TH felt a clubhouse would self-generate money.

KD felt it would not be the right time during the pandemic as we only have half the number of athletes. We do not know if the council would allow any building or how long Freedom Leisure will be running the stadium. It was felt it needed to be discussed later in the year. TH asked when the right time would be as the club is in the 56<sup>th</sup> year.

SW stated he agreed the club have to be extremely careful at the present time as there is a lot of background work which would have to be carried out, it will need to be owned and resourced from then on and AAC will need to commit to any issues and problems and would have to be able to continue to run it and follow through all long term costs including business rates, rent etc.

It was noted that at one time, we thought we would be able to have what is now Pod Plus as a club room, however, Ashford Borough Council refused. It was felt that if it is agreed it is what we want then a committee should be put together. JS thanked TH and stated we will try to move forward. TH asked for email address for Emma wood.

**Action:** JS will send EW's email address to him.

KD informed everyone she will keep everyone informed when training can resume.

JS thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 2027hrs.