

Questions to the Board



Company

- ▶ With the very overt display across social media of the "circle of trust" within ANI, what measures will you implement to regain any level of trust between the track and field community in N. I. and ANI?
- ▶ With everything already presented today we have demonstrated the efforts made to create a "circle of trust" within the **whole** of the sport. These measures include both Governance, Accountability and refreshed Strategy.
- ▶ The journey continues and we ask that you ALL need to be part of it

Staffing

- ▶ With the appointment of a dedicated middle distance member of staff, albeit on a part-time basis, when can we expect parity of esteem, with equivalent positions of dedicated events coaches for; throws, jumps, sprints and walks, etc?
- ▶ This issue was raised at last years AGM where it was felt that an endurance post was missing. The changes in Governance are aimed at making us a more inclusive sport. The Strategy review will speak to the direction of travel and how individual disciplines are supported.
- ▶ We of course recognise the importance of T&F to the sport

Commonwealth Games Review

- ▶ With the high number of injured athletes on the CWGNI athletics team this year, will you share details of what lessons have been learned and implications there are going forwards for;
 - ▶ Changing the medical support
 - ▶ WWT camps
 - ▶ Coach education
 - ▶ Staff education

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- ▶ Of the 15 athletes selected to represent NI, two were injured while competing in the build up to the Games and subsequently couldn't attend the holding camp. Two athletes also got injured at the Games during or after competition.
- ▶ There has been a review around this with SNISI practitioners and we have also been in consultation with other Home Countries as injuries were common across all countries, particularly foot injuries.
- ▶ There is no suggestion that any of these injuries could have been prevented with different medical support. Currently there is no evidence to suggest that most of these injuries were related to advanced shoe technology but we believe anecdotally that this may be the case.
- ▶ We intend to have webinars (as we have previously) around injury prevention and shoe technology to ensure that best practice in these areas can be adopted by coaches and athletes

Youth Academy

- ▶ Please provide a breakdown for each of the past 5 years of the numbers in the youth academy detailing how many athletes paid, and how many did not, whether that be due to the discretionary / hardship awards?
 - ▶ Further to the previous question, please share the criteria for the discretionary awards and is there a limit to the number given out each year?
 - ▶ Further to the first youth academy question, please share the criteria for accessing the hardship award!
- ▶ Discretionary Hardship awards are as they say related to Hardship. We are unable to discuss individuals financial positions either specifically or in aggregated terms as requested given the small size of the Academy cohort.
- ▶ All applicants are made aware of the availability of a fee waiver. None have recently applied, none the less the award process is being reviewed to ensure we have accountability for the provision of this support when requested.
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▶ **Academy fees vary depending on location and services provided**

▶ **Academy numbers since 2019**

2019-2020 – 61 Academy athletes made up of 42 YA (5 remote) and 19 SP

2020-2021 – 68 Academy athletes made up of 46 YA and 22 SP (Majority of athletes received no weekly service as only elite athletes were permitted to train indoors)

2021 -2022 – 54 Academy athletes made up of 36 YA (4 remote) and 18 SP

2022 -2023 – made up of 36 YA (4 remote) and 20 SP

Ulster Sports Council

- ▶ Association between ANI and the Ulster Sports Council - please explain the ongoing association both from a financial aspect and an organisational aspect. Include but not limited to; joint u20 team to Wales, joint championships, who funds and selects and organises.
- ▶ The relationship with USC is one that has been in place for some time. There is an ANI/AAI & USC Liaison group. The challenges have been identified enabling the formal and informal arrangements to be reviewed, but this will take some time as it is complex. It is on the 23/24 governance agenda. In broad terms the current arrangements were put in place to offer benefit our sport however it is not without challenge. Our joint championships benefit from more entries and higher standards as well as helping to strengthen the relationship with Athletics Ireland. USC are included in the selection process for teams and ANI broadly manages the overall entries and finances.

Finances

- ▶ What protocols are in place to limit double funding of athletes, i. e. Claiming from both ANI and another body for the same thing. Specifically, do you liaise with Athletics Ireland on this?
- ▶ Why is funding of athletes not used to showcase our athletes at ANI championships? The number of NI athletes overall was poorly supported in the senior T/F championships.
- ▶ We regularly liaise with AAI on funding of elite athletes and adjust what elements of their performance plan we support accordingly. We do not double fund as we only fund additional areas such as camps or medical not already covered by AAI. The same goes for when an athlete is on UKA funding.
- ▶ Athletes are required to compete at the NI Championships in Commonwealth Year (or the year before when necessary). If we are to be athlete centred it is better to improve our championships and make it more attractive for top athletes than to contract athletes to compete at NI Championships annually. E.g. How do we attract top athletes in events where we usually have 1-2 competitors such as Steeplechase or Sprint Hurdles
- ▶ Having said this Elaine is reviewing how we collaborate with Paralympics Ireland, UKA & AAI to ensure funding is allocated in the most effective way.

Registrations / Schools

- ▶ With schools in N. I. registered to Athletics Ireland over preference to ANI, what efforts have been made to approach schools and have them register with ANI. What support is made to existing T/F clubs in registered with ANI and what is offered by ANI to them? How often are they contacted by ANI?
- ▶ The Ulster Schools are vital to the long term viability of Athletics in Northern Ireland as without a “**playground to podium**” pathway the future of our sport and organisation will be at risk.
- ▶ We do work to support the schools with the likes of the Daily Mile and Flahavans, teachers coaching days and we are in discussion to further support their events
- ▶ The Schools registration with AAI is historic when the Irish Schools became affiliated to AAI. We would like the Ulster Schools to register via ANI but this will probably be a longer term project given initial soundings.

Track & Field (T&F) Clubs Support

- ▶ What support is made to existing T/F clubs in registered with ANI and what is offered by ANI to them? How often are they contacted by ANI?
- ▶ It is important to understand that the UKA Worlds Class Program, the AAI High Performance Program and Sport NI Performance Funding is targeted to Olympic Events so T&F has been a significant focus for us. ANI arranges Events & Coach Education which are inclusive for T&F clubs to participate in. All Social Media and Web information is addressed to the whole sport including T&F clubs. We Provide Safeguarding support, Club Self Assessment tool, Club Development Workshops and more all detailed on the Clubs Section of the ANI website.
- ▶ Management of Mary Peters Track helps ensure that T&F athletics clubs have the best outdoor facility in NI, we are also lobbying various agencies for indoor facilities.
- ▶ When asked If they had contacted ANI for help one T&F Club official confirmed the answer was NO

Coaching

- ▶ what plans are in place to further coaches with workshops/conferences in NI there used to be an annual conference, plus individual event workshops where specialist coaches were brought over to present?
- ▶ We are conscious of the need to provide coach development and in this regard a number of on line seminars held during covid were successful. Moving forward, we'll be looking to build on the online delivery of CPD & Workshops including access to specialist coaches for clubs and community in situ. For a specific conference or workshop series, we will seek to tie these together with the new strategy. A specific Coaching Conference is not ruled out if the desire is there from the coaching community.
- ▶ If any coach or other member has any specific requests regarding CPD, these can be sent through to coaching@athleticsni.org to help us formulate plans for the future.