

Swim England Sport Operations Committee

Minutes of the meeting held 13 July 2021, via Zoom

Draft minutes subject to approval at the next meeting

Present:

Neil Booth	Chairman
Joan Wheeler (JW)	Swim England Board Member
Ian Mackenzie (IM)	Swim England Member
Pippa Jones (PJ)	Swim England Member
Alex Harrison (AH)	Swim England Member
John Hidle (JH)	Regional Chairs Representative
George Wood (GW)	Sports Development Director
Jon Glenn (JG)	Learn to Swim and Workforce Director

Staff: Ali Sibcy-Allen (AS-A) Operations Administration Manager

Invited: Gaby Hay Head of Membership Development

Min No:

1. Standing Items

1.1 Chairman's welcome

The Chair welcomed all members.

1.2 Apologies

Ben Gregory
Jim Boucher
Rebecca Cox

1.3 Declarations of Interest

1.4 Minutes from previous meetings:

1.4.1 18 May 2021: The minutes were accepted.

1.5 Actions from previous meetings

1.5.1 Item 1.6 Leadership Group Roles and TOR: Ongoing item, updates will be provided when available.

1.5.2 Item 3.1 HF / AHT Award Review: SE Board accepted the proposed review and updated further to remove the issuing of a gift.

1.6 Leadership Group Updates

Club: Return to Water survey had pleasing response level with as at 30th June. 576 clubs had responded, an increase on responses received following Return to Water 1.0. From this 83% advised they were back in their primary pool with 57% having reduced pool time compared to pre-pandemic, others had seen changes in training times and cost increases. A common list of challenges was advised, including: price increases, reduction of swimmers, changes to committee

personnel, loss/lack of coaching staff, changes in family circumstances, restricted space availability in venues and volunteer retention.

Other topic areas included SwimMark ratification of accreditations, Stronger Affiliation and the Coaching and Teaching Register which are agenda items for this SOC meeting.

Artistic Swimming: Focus remains on the Olympic duet and continuing business as usual.

Water Polo: Competitions have returned with teams performing well especially in light of squads only recently being allowed to train with balls and goals. The competition review is ongoing but looking to be expedited to enable budgets to be submitted. Sponsorship for 10 schools has been funded through the Swimming Trust for equipment purchases.

Diving: Successful first Level X phase with 334 participants. Consultation throughout July for feedback on the competition pathway. CPD workshops for coaches and volunteers due to be run.

Swimming: Plans for the Festival of Swimming progressing. Following the Board agreement on funding the SLG decided not to run the Inter County Championships, however Masters and Winter Championships will be run. Decision made to postpone the OW festival due to timing and logistics. Level X concluded with c.20,000 swims logged. The selection policy for 2022 Commonwealths has been agreed and published.

2. **Items for Decision**

2.1 **Model Constitution**

The current model is known to be effective and following some revisions is considered fit for purpose. Support was requested from SOC members to adopt the changes and submit the paper to the SE Board.

Following acceptance, the next steps will be to deal with feedback on the draft and develop supporting guidance and hosting meetings with those approving affiliations to ensure a level of standardisation and consistency across the country.

Subject to some small amendments the model constitution was agreed, with the finalised document to be submitted to the SOC meeting in September.

Action: Submit final document to September SOC meeting

2.2 **Teaching and Coaching Register**

Pre-pandemic a huge amount of work was completed which is now being revisited and progressing onto phase two. This phase will require the submission of DBS checks and completion of safeguarding courses, which has been helped by the pandemic as they are now available online.

The proposed approach is to remain as before with teachers / coaches who are non-compliant being advised and given an opportunity to rectify before suspensions are implemented. Clubs were notified of any gaps in June along with supporting guidance and FAQs.

Clubs have been advised that there are 56 days to provide the evidence / attend a course, or provide evidence of being booked onto one. If these are not submitted a second reminder with 28 days' notice will be issued. Following continued non-

submission, a recommendation will be made to the CEO to suspend the individual until they are compliant. Ongoing quarterly checks will be made to check if outstanding certificates have been submitted.

The current delays in processing documentation was highlighted and agreed that timescales will be reviewed to ensure they are achievable in enabling compliance.

SOC members were supportive of the processes.

3. Items for Discussion

3.1 Inclusion Panel

GW started by recognising a huge amount has happened since the last meeting, both within the organisation and the wider world, and that the purpose of the paper is to ascertain views on how best to govern this area and make sure we are effectively making the sports as inclusive as possible. It was noted that this would be a discussion to gain views, which will be replicated with SLT, before submitting a paper to the SE Board.

The structure of inclusion within the RFU was presented to enable a starting point prior to discussions.

Discussions considered various approaches with preferences being:

- A general inclusion panel across all areas
- Inclusion panel to be made up of individuals with relevant lived experience and knowledge operating in the sport (but not necessarily from within current NGB committee structures)
- Set strategy and roadmap
- Check and challenge from outside of the sport will be important
- The panel should consider information and evidence from a wide range of people and groups to ensure full consideration of key issues
- Needs to consider barriers to participation and competition
- Ability to create working groups as needed
- Engagement with Regions, disciplines and operators
- Board level endorsement and embedded across the organisation

4. Items to Note

4.1 Membership

GH joined the meeting to present the wider membership plans proposal presenting a wider update and current membership numbers which are approximately:

- 140,000 club members
- 983 clubs
- 500 supporter members
- 410 swim schools
- 7000 IOS members

The proposal for 2021 is to rename the club membership categories (currently Category 1, 2 and 3), which is feasible within the regulations. It was proposed that the categories are amended to:

- Club Train
- Club Compete
- Club Support

In addition, a Coach Membership is recommended to be launched in November 2021 which will sit separately from IOS membership.

Details of the proposal for further category additions in 2022 were provided, along with highlighting the price point review for 2023 implementation. Details to be circulated following the meeting.

Members were asked to consider the amendments to the category names with the definitions remaining as before, these were agreed.

Action: GH to circulate full details of the proposal

4.2 National Events Proposal

An update was provided to advise members that Board approval had been received for the national events paper. Additionally, given the nature of the event, the SLG determined it would not be practical to host the Inter County Championships in 2021.

Following Government restrictions being eased, further SE information will be prepared to support meet promoters / event organisers in taking a measured and responsible approach to events delivery.

4.3 Stronger Affiliation update

Following the deadline, progression has been made in starting to permanently suspend clubs who haven't achieved Stronger Affiliation, which requires regional implementation.

There are also 13 clubs who have not renewed their SwimMark accreditation and of these a number did not meet Stronger Affiliation criteria either. The clubs have been contacted by their Region to address this issue.

Going forward Stronger Affiliation will be a rolling programme with clubs needing to achieve the standards every 12 months.

4.4 Health and Safety Forum

An update was provided with SOC members happy for the Forum to progress with the submitted plan.

5. AOB

5.1 CPSU Audit: Changes have been made to the process with the standards marking guide having been changed. Results of the audit which took place on 7th July are awaited. The safeguarding team were thanked.

5.2 Decision feedback to SOC: The committee considered whether there is a need for confirmation of decisions to be distributed following a SOC approved submission to the Board.

Agreement was given that operational decisions should be implemented with an update provided at SOC meetings. Information deemed critical for SOC members would be circulated as required.

6. 2021 Meeting Dates

- Tuesday 14 September
- Tuesday 16 November