

# Swim England Sport Operations Committee

Minutes of the meeting held 16 November 2021, via Zoom

**Draft minutes subject to approval at the next meeting**

<b>Present:</b>	Neil Booth	Chairman
	Joan Wheeler (JW)	Swim England Board Member
	Ian Mackenzie (IM)	Swim England Member
	Jim Boucher (JB)	Swim England Member
	Pippa Jones (PJ)	Swim England Member
	Alex Harrison (AH)	Swim England Member
	John Hidle (JH)	Regional Chairs Representative
	Ben Gregory (BG)	Chair of Youth Advisory Panel
	George Wood (GW)	Sports Development Director
	Jon Glenn (JG)	Learn to Swim and Workforce Director
	Rebecca Cox (RC)	Swim England Business Engagement Director & Institute of Swimming Managing Director
<b>Staff:</b>	Ali Sibcy-Allen (AS-A)	Operations Administration Manager
	Jenny Norvill (JN)	Head of IOS (Item 1.5.3)
	Gaby Hay (GH)	Head of Membership Development (Item 4.1)
	Helen Weeks (HW)	Club Governance & Standards Manager (Item 3.2)
	Rob Henderson (RH)	Senior Operations Administrator

## Invited:

### Min No:

- 1. Standing Items**
- 1.1 **Chairman's welcome**  
NB introduced RH to the meeting, outlining his role to other committee members.
- 1.2 **Apologies**  
None recorded
- 1.3 **Declarations of Interest**  
None recorded
- 1.4 **Minutes from previous meetings:**
- 1.4.1 14 September 2021: The minutes were accepted.
- 1.5 **Actions from previous meetings**
- 1.5.1 1.6 – YAP Retention Project: Two meetings have now been held, notes will be condensed and circulated.
- 1.5.2 2.1 – Leadership group role meeting: Varied discussions including structure, strategies, operations planning and communications alongside the way forward.

The meeting was valued and will be repeated up to three times annually, around the planning, development and progression of programmes.

### 1.5.3 3.1 – WP coach education:

JN was welcomed to the meeting to provide an update on WP coach education. It was advised that since the start of the pandemic 122 L1 assistant coaches have completed their theory training enabling their practical assessments to be arranged. In addition, two L2 coaching courses have been run to completion with a third underway which will result in 32 qualified L2 coaches.

Practical assessments recommenced in April 2021, following the easing in lockdown restrictions, with Regions met in July to discuss centre availability and demand. Following this a two-tier approach has been confirmed to enable the completion of practical assessments and the delivery of full courses during 2022.

It was noted that tutor situations have changed which has hindered progress as well as venue access. Regions have been contacted to discuss utilising the Regional Training Centres to ensure assessments are able to be completed delivering to the appropriate level.

The WPLG has been met with to discuss concerns and outline the format of the programme. Moving forwards the following were agreed:

- Two-way communications regarding the state of play and competition information
- A quarterly slot to enable challenges to be raised and solutions sought
- Closer work with professional staff and support to be provided as needed.

The huge amount of invaluable work Sarah Dunsbee has completed voluntarily was noted and thanks recorded.

It was agreed that progress has been made but there are still challenges to delivery, particularly in the South East Region, in ensuring suitable athletes for practical assessments.

**Action:** IM to take points back to WPLG

The delivery model of the courses was queried, focussing on the reliance on using club sessions and not engaging directly with operators. The cost savings of the current model were highlighted while confirmation was given that should appropriate sessions not be available a revised model of booking the venue and inviting players will be implemented, noting that there are cost implications of doing this.

It was agreed that the club offer and associated savings need to be re-communicated to clubs.

Discussion moved to review the cost breakdown of the courses noting that current surpluses across all courses are minimal and viewed as admin costs, contributing to the development and maintenance of courses as well as the time in organising the courses. Consideration would be given to taking a potential loss on the water polo courses if considered to be at a manageable scale. RC advised that any surplus the IOS makes is donated to SE to support all disciplines, as well as confirming that should a more suitable delivery model be available outside of the IOS there is scope for those conversations to be held.

JN was thanked for her time and preparation for the meeting with recognition being given to the progress made and plans being in place for future delivery.

## 1.6 Leadership Group Updates

**Club:** The next meeting will be held in December. Future meetings have been moved to align with re-affiliation dates.

**Artistic Swimming:** Delivery of virtual competitions are ongoing with a hope to be back to physical competition in 2022 with a planning meeting for setting competition dates in December. Annual Regional Manager meeting has been held with regions following the national pathway.

**Water Polo:** The competition review is currently on hold until the talent team have confirmed how the talent programme will move forwards. IRC's are being held during November and December and all squads are meeting regularly.

**Diving:** Currently recruiting a volunteer lead and looking to fill vacant roles to form a strong committee. The competition pathway and handbook have had their final draft and are with the Design Team. It was reported that the National Skills final 'fell off the radar' but has now been picked up and is being progressed.

### **Swimming:**

Unfortunately AH had left the meeting before this item was addressed – No update given

**YAP:** The coaching strategy and YP perspective on coaching have been discussed and sub-group meetings for retention project have been held. Suggested to work with the Insight Team during the retention project to ensure organisational consistency.

Recruiting for new members has commenced with shortlisting currently ongoing. BG will not be continuing as YAP Chair from September 2022. TORs required his replacement to come from within the group, and work is ongoing with NB and CC to determine interview questions and formal process.

## 2. Items for Decision

### 2.1 **Health and Safety Forum**

Subject to the recommended amendments and clarifications it was agreed to recirculate the document via email.

Assuming that agreement to the amends was received recruitment will commence.

**Action:** GW and NB to make amends and recirculate.

## 3. Items for Discussion

### 3.1 **Review of fee for SE Appeals Policy**

GW advised that the current format mirrors that of BS with complainants going back to the selectors to appeal, if this is unsuccessful the next step is to engage Sports Resolutions. While the Commonwealth Games are the largest affected competition the wording currently means the policy applies at all levels of England team selection.

Following discussions, it was felt that for all levels the appeals process could be brought in house with the panel for the second level differing depending on the situation.

For the vast majority of situations, it was proposed that the panel would be comprised of two members of the SE Board and an appropriate third person

whereas for the CWG the third person would be required to be an independent legal advisor who would act as the Chair.

**Action:** NB and GW to progress

### 3.2 **Coaching Policy for Clubs**

HW was introduced to the meeting.

Background on the updates was provided, recognising the need to ensure governance and expected standards are being upheld by both clubs and operators. Salient points include strengthening the advice and looking at the governance of clubs (specifically safe and good practices).

The document will be updated to enable equivalent coaching qualifications to be taken into consideration ensuring that the emphasis is to highlight the need for coaches to deliver activities within the scope of their qualification. Further clarification for dry land training is needed alongside developing clubs' understanding of non-UK qualifications and their need to complete their due diligence. Where clubs have only L1 coaches, transitional plans should be developed with action plans to train L2 coaches as a matter of urgency.

Confirmation was given that the document is to be implemented across all disciplines and for SOC members to feedback to GW if there is wording where this is not clear.

Discussion turned to lifeguarding and the impact of pool availability. The agreement was that the preferred situation was for lifeguarding to be provided by an appropriately qualified person other than the coach. It was recognised that in some situations it may be necessary for the club to also be the lifeguard. If this is the case, a club must assess risks and ensure that appropriate mitigations are in place to ensure this is safe and effective. The coach must have relevant lifeguarding qualifications and the procedures must be agreed with the pool operator. The document provides recommendations with club's risk assessing provisions and working with operators.

The document is an update of the current statement and so would be implemented once signed off. There was acknowledgement that some aspects may need to be clarified further and agreement was given that SE have a duty of care in developing it and ensuring it is available for all members to see so concerns can be raised if clubs are not adhering to the recommendations.

The requirement for L2 coaches being required to lead a team at competitions was queried based on the volume of competitions and potential lack of L2's to enable this provision, limiting the events which can be held / attended. It was agreed that the aspiration is for coaches leading teams at national events to be level 2 qualified with the club's risk assessing to determine suitable individuals to lead teams at other events.

**Action:** GW and HW to take the document away to review and circulate via email for potential sign off.

### 3.3 **2022 Meeting Dates**

Dates were confirmed with one amendment requested for the February date. Meetings to remain on Tuesday mornings at 10am.

**Action:** AS-A to circulate meeting dates.

#### 4. **Items to Note**

##### 4.1 **Membership Review Update**

Details of category name amendments were circulated to members in September for implementation in 2022, positive feedback received. The wider review, incorporating stakeholder engagement, is ongoing.

The coach membership proposal will shortly be presented to the SLT followed by the IOS Board. Working groups to consider all proposals to be set up during December.

Project outdoors: Database is being built with a focus on the participation side of open water activity. This group demonstrates the greatest engagement of any Swim England database. Focus is on partnership working and supporting other programmes by external organisations such as Surfers Against Sewage and the Canal and River Trust.

OW forms part of the 2022 plans with a monthly newsletter currently circulating. A number of 'influencers' to be recruited and supported by the Marketing team to assist with raising the profile of SE OW campaigns.

Consideration was given to a SOC working group for membership but it was felt important to allow the working group autonomy with SOC members supporting if deemed necessary. It was suggested that details of what membership payments contribute towards are made available, which has previously been requested.

#### 5. **AOB**

5.1 National Masters Event: Noted that the entry prices increased after being advised this wasn't going to happen. Work being completed on 2022 events, suggested that EB should be invited to the January meeting to update and that post event reports to be requested following all national events.

5.2 **Action:** EB to be invited to January meeting. Post event reports to be requested. Volunteer Expenses: Update provided and the position of requesting funding from the Board for SE National events was advised.

#### 6. **2022 Meeting Dates**

- Tuesday 18 January, 10am
- Tuesday 15 February, 10am
- Tuesday 29 March, 10am
- Tuesday 24 May, 10am
- Tuesday 12 July, 10am
- Tuesday 13 September, 10am
- Tuesday 18 October, 10am
- Tuesday 22 November, 10am