

Swim England Sport Operations Committee

Minutes of the meeting held 18 January 2022, 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
	Jim Boucher (JB)	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
	Rebecca Cox (RC)	Swim England Business Engagement Director & Institute of Swimming Managing Director

Staff:	Ali Sibcy-Allen (AS-A)	Operations Administration Manager
	Ekaterina Boyd (EK)	Head of Events

Min No:

1. Standing Items

1.1 Chairman's welcome

Welcome to 2022 and the January meeting.

1.2 Apologies

Pippa Jones and Ben Gregory

1.3 Declarations of Any other business

Neil Booth – rules committee

1.4 Minutes from previous meetings:

1.4.1 16 November 2021: The minutes were accepted.

Written reports from the discipline liaisons to be submitted ASAP via email following the meeting if required

1.5 Actions from previous meetings

1.5.1 1.5.1 – YAP retention project, NB to follow up with BG

1.5.2 1.5.2 – Fee review for appeals policy: update to be provided when following Director of Legal commencing their role.

1.6 Leadership Group Updates

Club: Affiliation and Stronger Affiliation will be known as Club Affiliation moving forwards. Noted that there seems to be a communication issue which is being addressed whereby central decisions supported by regions are not being supported in the region. Regions are represented on the decision making group.

Artistic Swimming: progress has been made with events being confirmed throughout 2022. The virtual sessions were well received during 2021 but the standards of performance were noted to be lower. Currently working on a strategy to be completed shortly.

Water Polo: physical events were held at the end of 2021 and squad sessions are taking place. A competition review is ongoing with a Performance Operations role being recruited for to support the DiSE programme.

Diving: no update available

Swimming: Working group formed to consider the strategy for swimming as well as a number of other groups including strobe lighting and swimwear. Masters working group has been convened and appointed, members will fully start roles following their induction.

YAP: no update available

It was agreed a substitute should be sought from other SOC members if a group representative is unable to attend a discipline group meeting. Where a liaison is absent from a SOC meeting, a written report should be submitted, preferably before the meeting but if absence was not anticipated then post SOC meeting to be circulated with the minutes.

2. Items for Decision

2.1 Health and Safety Forum ToRs

The revised document was circulated, incorporating the changes previously suggested.

SOC members approved the document.

2.2 Coaching Policy for Clubs

The revised document was circulated with amends made, noting that future changes may be required subject to changes relating to RPL requirements.

SOC members approved the document which will now be uploaded to the website and communicated to relevant parties via newsletters and coaching forums.

Action: GW to arrange for website upload and document circulation.

3. Items for Discussion

3.1 2022 National Events

EB was welcomed to meeting.

An overview of the previously circulated paper was given. Three physical events were noted to have been delivered as opposed to the programme proposed in June. The proximity of the events, available resources and the covid conditions at the time were recognised as being barriers to the open water events while feedback from counties led to the cancellation of the National County Team Championships.

The Masters National Championships was well received with entries reflective of previous years and adequate workforce to deliver.

The Water Polo NAGs were held at the time that omicron was on the rise with clubs being surveyed to ensure they were still intending to participate, with one club withdrawing, and entries being comparable to previous years. While a number of officials withdrew there were enough volunteers to successfully deliver the event.

The National Winter Championships received an overwhelming number of entries resulting in a short notice but well planned change to the event format with two short-course pools being used for heats. Ticket sales were limited based on venue restrictions with spectator flows needing to be considered and support provided by venue security. There were 1,600 unique entries equating to c.4,000 swims.

It is estimated that the events have been delivered at a net surplus due to high entry numbers and cost management, this will be clarified once the end of year accounts are confirmed.

Virtual events continued to be held during 2021, predominantly for Artistic Swimming who held one each month with swimmers submitting routines recorded in their home pool which were judged remotely. Presentations for these events were also made virtually.

The National Awards were also delivered virtually. Received nominations were reflective of previous year and regions determined their winners who then progressed to the national stage.

It was requested that an overview of event reports should be provided with JB to submit ideas of what should be included to NB.

Action: JB to submit ideas for inclusion in event reports to NB.

2022 events

The draft calendar for 2022 has been circulated. It was advised EB is currently the only team member with recruitment ongoing for an Events Officer and an Events Admin role.

The first event scheduled is the Artistic Swimming NAGs event in April, with entries due to open shortly, followed by Water Polo. The proposed calendar is reflective of 2019's with a return to traditional dates and venues. A request to add the Inter-Counties Masters event to the national calendar for information was noted.

The budget for the events has been approved based upon the 2019 budget with adjustments for inflation. Discussion considered whether some disciplines should make a loss on events while other disciplines event income supports their delivery.

Reference was made to the continued uncertainty surrounding the pandemic and the significantly reduced staffing costs. The priority was deemed to be recruitment and on-boarding of the events team and the delivery of the initial events with a review during the year to consider the strategic aims. The review would enable adjustments to be implemented for 2023 delivery.

Action: events review to be added to mid-year agenda.

3.2

Coaching – Recognised Prior Learning (RPL)

An established coaching programme is in place for the majority of disciplines across the organisation. Swim England and the Institute of Swimming are working together to consider what constitutes good practice for those who have not

completed our courses. At the next meeting there will be a discussion on RPL with a proposal presented.

Action: RC to submit paper for February meeting.

3.3 **SOC Membership: skill based members and succession planning**

SOC has reached end of first four-year cycle for skills based members.

At the introduction of SOC, IM joined as Board representative and agreed to pick up the Water Polo liaison role. In 2020 following stepping down from the SE Board IM became a skills based member. Of the remaining three skills based members AH has confirmed his continuation of the role while PJ and JB have advised they would like to step down.

Two positions will be recruited for with the role description and terms of reference to be included with the advert.

JB has proposed to step down by the second quarter of 2022, with a replacement starting in role for the May meeting. NB to discuss timescales with PJ.

Action: NB to discuss with PJ.

4. **Items to Note**

4.1 **Legacy plans for B2022**

An update on the legacy plans previously advised was provided, recognising that these are continually evolving.

Funding for NGBs to deliver a legacy plan will be made available to focus on addressing inequalities. A meaningful legacy plan for aquatics which aligns with Swim England's strategic objectives has been developed titled 'Inspire 2022' with the objectives being:

- Maintaining water space at a regional and national level
- Increasing the diversity of the workforce
- Increasing the number of pupils meeting the KS2 requirements and being able to safely self-rescue
- Developing well defined optimal athlete pathways and access to the sport
- The most successful ever swimming and diving team
- Utilising the power of the games to inspire members and the next generation of athletes.

The legacy group is looking at the key aims and how the attainment of these will be achieved most effectively. Discussions with funding providers are ongoing with a number of providers attached to the legacy of the games. Consideration is being given to resourcing the coordination of the project and applying for funding.

It was advised that the pre-competition water polo tournament has been rescheduled to later in the year with the local authority actively pursuing its delivery.

5. **AOB**

5.1 Rules committee: The current membership has decided to stand down following frustrations over preceding years. Revised TORs have been proposed but are now on hold following a change in the Director of Legal and the new post holder not having yet started. Following the new Director of Legal starting the role, discussions on how to progress will be held.

- 5.2 Membership review: The TORs for the Membership Review Group were queried over the alignment to discussions at the previous SOC meeting. A desire to be able to interrogate the proposal was reiterated prior to its submission to the AGM.

The TORs are to be requested to be circulated to SOC members. Gaby Hay is to be asked to attend the February meeting if possible, and provide an update if not.

Action: AS-A to circulate TORs to SOC members. GH to attend February meeting.

- 5.3 Update from Head of Facilities: It was suggested that an update from Richard Lamburn on facilities may be beneficial with consideration to be given on whether this would be more feasible in February or March.

Action: NB to add to February or March agenda.

6. **2022 Meeting Dates**

- 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