

Swim England Sport Operations Committee

Minutes of the meeting held 28 February 2023

Draft minutes subject to approval at the next meeting

Present:

Joan Wheeler (JW)	Swim England Board Member (Chair)
Neil Booth (NB)	Swim England Board Member
Amy Bryant	Swim England Member
Ian Mackenzie (IM)	Swim England Member
Keith Munday (KM)	Swim England Member
John Hidle (JHi)	Regional Chairs Representative
Rebecca Cox (RC)	Swim England Business Engagement Director & Institute of Swimming Managing Director

Staff:

Ali Sibcy-Allen (AS-A)	Operations Administration Manager
Claire Coleman (CC)	Head of Development
Ekaterina Boyd (EB)	Head of Events
Lindsay Trimmings (LT)	Head of Coaching
Leanne Brace (LB)	Head of Membership
Mike Hawkes (MH)	Head of Diversity and Inclusion

Min No:

1. Standing Items

1.1 Chairperson's welcome

JW welcomed members to the meeting,

1.2 Apologies

Ellie Conway, Alex Harrison, George Wood and Jon Glenn.

1.3 Declarations of Interest

IM and AB – item 3.3.

1.4 Declarations of AOB

None recorded.

1.5 Minutes from previous meetings:

1.5.1 17 January 2023: The minutes were accepted as an accurate record.

1.6 Actions from previous meetings

1.6.1 22.22 Risk assessment portal: EG to be invited to the next meeting to provide update on progress. EG would be asked to provide information on the function of portal in relation to sharing of information about incidents.

1.6.2 22.28 Leadership Group TORs: Issued to three groups, CLG and DLG to be completed.

1.6.3 22.34 LTS and Workforce Audit: Moved to May agenda.

- 1.6.4 23.01 DLG: No paper available.
- 1.6.5 23.03 Inspire Programme: Beth Barrett to be invited to May meeting.
- 1.6.6 23.04 SE Strategy: Discussion held with Regional Chairs. Remain to be held with Leadership Groups. Update to be provided at May meeting.
- 1.7 **Leadership Group Updates**
- 1.7.1 Artistic Swimming: nothing further to update.
- 1.7.2 Clubs: AB advised the workload for regions had significantly increased due to the submission of evidence for SwimMark and affiliation. Consideration to be given to revising some submission dates to spread the workload.
- 1.7.3 Diving: No update reported.
- 1.7.4 Swimming: nothing further to update.
- 1.7.5 Water Polo: IM acting as interim Chair. Need for LG recruitment and to engage the regional representatives was highlighted. Competition review is underway, coaching course are accessible across the country and a more streamlined judicial procedure is being implemented.

2. **Items for Information**

2.1 **Membership Pricing Review**

LB was welcomed to the meeting.

Members received a confidential report on membership from Leanne Brace, Head of Membership.

Further information relating to the declining number of club train members and information on the removal of club LTS programmes was provided. SOC discussed the fee structure and barriers to membership for this group. Discussion considered the insurance provision for LTS programmes and how any changes could cause an inequality with other membership groups. The importance of promoting the benefits of SE membership was highlighted.

LB advised the previously formed working group had been temporarily suspended. JW and LB are to meet to discuss the working group and the membership and bring a recommendation to the May meeting.

Action: JW and LB to discuss the membership of the working group and bring a recommendation to the May meeting.

Following the conclusion of the discussions, it was agreed that options outlined in the report should be taken to SLT before being brought back to the next SOC meeting. Further consideration should also be given to how the proposals could impact on the introduction of an LTS membership, which has been previously discussed.

Action: LB to return to SOC following discussion with SLT.

SOC requested that more work be done on the wider implications of clubs moving LTS programmes out of the SE framework and the resulting consequences of having a section within a club whose members were not SE members. CC confirmed there is already work ongoing in this area and will liaise with LB.

Action: LB and CC to liaise re: clubs moving LTS out of SE framework.

The report drew attention to Regulation 47.4.1, which limited membership fee increases to inflationary levels. SOC noted that the wording of the regulation was restrictive in the context of a membership review and was supportive of a proposal to Board that Regulations be amended. It was agreed that a proposal to the Board be considered at the same time as recommendation on the 2024 membership fees is made.

Action: LB to include recommendation to remove Regulation in Board report relating to 2024 membership fees.

SOC thanked LB for the level of information provided within the report, noting the content was confidential and should not be shared, or discussed, more widely.

2.2 **Teaching and Coaching Register – Compliance Approach**

LT was welcomed to the meeting.

LT advised that previous feedback from SOC had been reviewed and discussed with the safeguarding team. SOC was supportive of the revisions outlined in the report circulated.

Discussion considered the requirement for coaches to hold enhanced DBS checks for the issuing of coaches passes and the resulting implications for events, promoters and welfare officers. The associated risk management was questioned with the measures needing to be implemented by county, regional and open meets needing further determination, including how open meet promoters may be able to check requirements are met. LT and CC are to engage with the discipline leadership groups and return to SOC with a proposal on how to embed the requirements at all levels.

Action: LT and CC to discuss how to embed the requirements within the disciplines and return to SOC with a proposal.

LT continued to update on the previous actions requested and resulting considerations:

- **Grace Period:** Amendment to one-month grace period for those new to role to enable the completion of safeguarding training and enhanced DBS checks. Process to advise of issues to be in place to enable the completion of risk assessments. Further thought needs to be given to who would be complete the risk assessments at lower levels.
- **Parnassus:** Further work is being completed on Parnassus to ensure the right qualifications are listed for learners.
- **Issuing Certificates:** There has been a lot of discussion over the time frame for issuing certificates with ways to speed the process up being explored, recognising any automated systems would need to integrate with current systems.
- **Automated Email System:** Currently members receive three notifications prior to the expiration of their DBS check or safeguarding training. Recommendation to move the third message to 'day after expiration' to explicitly outline that they should not be operating in advised role on poolside. Discussions are ongoing with the Legal Team as to the feasibility of advising club chairmen and welfare officer.

The need to clearly define supervision for those undergoing training and checks was noted and it was confirmed requirements are for both coaches and teachers operating within clubs.

LT concluded by advising that 9% of those listed on the Teaching and Coaching Register have unsubscribed from emails which, alongside email bounce backs, correlates with a demonstrated compliance rate of close to 90%. Work was being undertaken to overcome this issue.

SOC members thanked LT for the update and asked that she return to a future meeting to report on progress.

2.3 Policy Removal Approvals

2.3.1 SE1013 Volunteer Positions Nominations Policy
Agreement to remove.

2.3.2 SE1024 Calendar Planning – Swimming
Agreement to remove.

2.3.3 SE1026 Volunteer Policy
Agreement to remove.

2.3.4 SE1030 Travel policy for parents / partners / relatives / friends of team members
Agreement to remove.

2.3.5 SE1031 Age of Swimming
Agreement to remove.

2.3.6 SE1035 Team Managers
Agreement to remove.

2.3.7 SE1036 Appointment of Jury of Appeal for National Events
Agreement to remove.

2.3.8 SE1037 Appointment of Officials for National Events
Updated to clarify roles. Remain on register for review in three years' time.

2.3.9 SE1040 Trophies and Awards National Events Policy
Members requested engagement with the Leadership Groups to confirm they accept the proposed changes and an update to be brought to the May meeting.

Action: EB to liaise with the Leadership Groups and return to May meeting.

Following discussion, it was agreed that CC would check that the content of the removed policies is available in other documents. If this is not be case, the information will be reissued as guidance following review and updates.

3. Items for Discussion

3.1 National Events

EB was welcomed to the meeting.

The supplied paper, summarising the finances for each event and the overall performance for the year, was taken as read. EB advised that delivery for 2022 reflected events in 2019, with the exception of an OW Masters event, and utilised the same venues.

Within the paper a complete overview for each event was provided. Learnings included an increased challenge in recruiting volunteers for all roles and a reduction in entry numbers for most events. Capacity had been an additional pressure as the Events Team was smaller than in 2019, with two of the three members of staff being recruited during 2022 with little downtime to embed.

SOC considered the cost of event delivery and any additional enhancements that could increase income to offset the costs. EB outlined additional income received when hosting events in Sheffield and restrictions in place on merchandising due to sponsorship, welcoming any thoughts on other potential income streams.

The capacity of the Events Team was discussed, recognising any additional events may need to be at the expense of an existing competition or delivered utilising the same format as the Diving National Skills event. The need for staff to work with each discipline to review their portfolio of events, considering the purpose and benefit of each event, was highlighted. CC recommended this could be tied into wider strategy conversations with the Leadership Groups with a steer from SE over expectations. There was agreement for CC and EB to develop a proposal and return to SOC.

Action: CC and EB to develop competition review plan and return to SOC.

EB continued to outline the departments focus areas for 2023:

- Winter Meet: Updates to the event are being discussed at SLG.
- Venue Dressing: Quotes from the preferred supplier have increased substantially. The look and feel of events is known to be important to athletes. The Events Team will complete an exercise to procure generic products and manage internally using contractors. EB will update following review.
- Health and Safety: Partnership working with British Swimming to contract an expert to review all risk assessments and policies. It is anticipated this will be completed by May. EB will update following completion and will look into whether the resulting documents are suitable to share with counties and regions. The expert will also complete an open water risk assessment to determine the minimal water temperature for swimming in England. It was suggested that EB contact other Northern European countries to learn from their experiences.
- Accreditation: Requesting an uplift to Level 2 coach for national events with Level 1 coaches able to attend alongside, but not in place of, a level 2 coach from that club. System development is being discussed in addition to timelines, with a desired implementation from September. Concerns were noted for some disciplines, recognising the requirement would be in line with the Coaching Policy. The impact on coaches and the club were noted.
- Welfare Officers: Discussions are ongoing with the Safeguarding Team to provide a designated Welfare Officer at national events.

EB was thanked for her report.

3.2 **Transgender Competition Policy**

MH was welcomed to the meeting.

The background of the policy and future plans were provided, noting the content is approved and the focus is now on implementation. MH emphasised that there has been a massive cultural shift and the importance in recognising this.

The policy will be a domestic policy focussing on participation, providing opportunities for trans competitors to compete with inclusion only limited when justified. MH outlined the discipline specific approach which has been underpinned by the safeguarding of the overall sport pathways and incorporating safety at all levels.

The revised policy is expected to be published in late March and would include a comparison between the old and new policies. Implementation is expected from 1 September, which would avoid changing regulations mid-season.

SOC approved the launch and implementation dates with MH confirming that a communication plan work is being agreed to ensure that all stakeholders are advised of the updates and potential impact to them.

MH was thanked for the work completed with SOC members noting the confidentiality of the report.

3.3 **Safeguarding Training**

CC reported that, historically, SE have accepted generic safeguarding training from a limited range of other providers. In 2020 SE specific training was developed embedding Wavepower, with the refresher course now in development.

In order to ensure that safeguarding training was compatible with Wavepower, CC is working alongside the Safeguarding Team to move to a position where the only training accepted is that which has been developed, and commissioned, by SE. It is proposed that this is achieved via a phased approach dependent on training cycles and renewal points.

CC proposed that the change is implemented from 1 January 2024. It was also proposed that the training requirement encompasses 16 and 17 year olds if they are in a position of trust.

SOC queried the training for under 18s. CC advised that subject to SOC agreement to the main proposals, discussions would be had with SEQ and IOS as to the best approach for under 18s.

It was requested that club teachers are included within the communications to ensure the information is received by all concerned. Questions were raised over Technical Officials, noting they are not eligible for DBS checks but recognising having safeguarding training may be beneficial for them and the sport. CC is to review and provide an update.

Action: CC to review what safeguarding training should be provided to Technical Officials.

SOC Members agreed to the proposal.

4. **Items to Note**

4.1 **Competitive Start Award**

Due to time pressures, this item was deferred to the May meeting.

5. **AOB**

None recorded.

6. **2023 Meeting Dates**

- Tuesday 2 May 2023, 10am
- Tuesday 27 June 2023, 10am
- Tuesday 12 September 2023, 10am
- Tuesday 28 November 2023, 10am