

# Meeting of the Oversight Committee of the Amateur Swimming Association (Swim England) Limited

Wednesday 6 December 2023, 11:00

Podium meeting room, SportPark, Loughborough

**Attended:**

Andrea Chilton – Chair (AC)  
Karen Gray (KG)  
James Hollis (JH)  
Neil Booth (NB)  
Joan Wheeler (JW)  
Lois Jarvis (LJ)  
Marie Cooper (MC)  
Ally White (AW)

**Apologies:**

Cassandra Patten (CP)  
James Gyselynck (JG)

**Officers in attendance:**

Hannah Foster – Executive Operations Manager (HF)

**1. Welcome and apologies**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. It was noted that JG and CP had sent their apologies.
- 1.2 It was acknowledged that KG is attending the meeting remotely.
- 1.3 The Committee was deemed quorate at the meeting with 5 voting members present.
- 1.4 The Committee welcomed Marie and Ally and introductions were given.
- 1.5 The Chair iterated the Oversight Committee's purpose to check and challenge, whilst providing scrutiny in order to aid Swim England's progress with the Heart of Aquatics.
- 1.6 The agenda was outlined by the Chair. In addition, AC reminded the Committee that upon discussions of a sensitive nature, members are able to choose to remove themselves from the meeting if they feel uncomfortable.

**2. Minutes from previous meeting**

05 October 2023

- 2.1 Members of the Committee deemed the minutes an accurate reflection of the meeting.
- 2.2 The Committee discussed the delay in The Behavioural Architects (TBA) session originally scheduled for the 23 November 2023, following a response from the Swim England CEO regarding the rescheduling of the session to the 30 January 2024. It was acknowledged that several members cannot be in attendance, therefore the query was raised as to whether a follow up session would be available, so all members have the opportunity to receive the information.

- 2.3 **Action: LJ to check the possibility of a follow up session for members who cannot attend TBA session.**
- 3. Actions update**
- 3.1 A05 – review under-representation: Action to be removed as duplication of A18.
- 3.2 A06, A10 and A17: Noted as ongoing actions for every meeting.
- 3.3 A13 – Matrix: Acknowledged as complete.
- 3.4 A14 – Accessible documents: Will be discussed during agenda.
- 3.5 A15 – Accessible model for raising complaints: Action now complete. LJ has discussed internally and with the Barrister for the new regulations. Routes for users are established, and appear to be working well in practice. There is enough knowledge internally to transfer complaints to the correct department.
- 3.6 A18 – Review demographics: Demographics are not ready to review due to delay with the listening programme.
- 3.7 A19 – Amend judicial and safeguarding paper: **LJ to pick this up.**
- 3.8 A20 – Digital update: NB and JW have discussed this project with the Board. The digital project is not at a stage to have an update but will be provided once ready.
- 3.9 A21 – Appointment of consultant: LJ to cover in the agenda.
- 3.10 A22 – Benefits of the coaching initiative. AW confirmed that as an organisation Swim England have not signed up. There has been enquiries, but still uncertainty of the benefits it will provide. Head of Coaching (once appointed) will decide whether it is beneficial as a business to sign up.
- 3.11 A23 – Test the adult safeguarding policy: Testing has not taken place due to delays of the regulations. Ann Craft Trust is satisfied with their requirements of the policy. The policy has undergone EDI checks and is due to go to Board on 12 December for approval of publication prior to testing.
- 3.12 **Action: LJ to send the final designed Wavepower policy to the Committee.**
- 3.13 It was agreed that user testing the policy document would check that processes work for the audiences it was designed for.
- 3.14 Additionally, the Committee suggested a user guide for Swim England regulations to help users understand the terminology and processes in a simpler format. This was agreed
- 3.15 It was highlighted that adding the practice of user testing to gain members feedback is a new process for Swim England that can enable the embedding of a positive culture from the outset and be more connected to members. User testing can then be fed into the timeline of projects going forward.
- 3.16 It was agreed that there was no intent to seek a delay in the publication of the policy document in order to complete user testing, which could be undertaken in January 2024.
- 3.17 A24, A26 and A27: Noted as complete.
- 3.18 A25 – Regulations and policy implications: LJ to cover in the agenda.
- 3.19 A28 – Matters presenting risk to HoA delivery: On the agenda to be discussed.

#### **4. Terms of Reference**

- 4.1 This item was brought forward on the agenda as the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference affect the attendees of the meeting.
- 4.2 *MC and AW were asked to leave the meeting for the deliberation of this agenda item.*
- 4.3 The Swim England CEO and the Chair of the Oversight Committee had prior discussions regarding suggested changes to the Terms of Reference to allow for three Senior Leadership Team (SLT) members to be on the Committee as non-voting members. Marie Cooper (People Development Director) and Ally Whike (Sport Development Director) have been proposed as the additional SLT members.
- 4.4 The Chair showed support for additional SLT members to join the Committee, in order to facilitate speedier learning by the Committee. This is to be reviewed after one year.
- 4.5 The Committee conversed the proposal and had no objections to incorporate three SLT non-voting members into the Terms of Reference for the Oversight Committee, as it was felt there was no threat to the independence of the Committee. In any event, the Terms of Reference were the purview of the Board.
- 4.6 *MC and AW re-joined the meeting.*

#### **5. Safeguarding and Judicial regulations**

- 5.1 LJ explained that the team had been working with an external barrister for the regulations. The regulations have been created and have been provided to the Board for information.
- 5.2 The assessment of risk and resource regarding the regulations and this deadline were discussed. The team dealing with the regulations is said to have been working at good speed, albeit an acknowledgement of time constraints has been considered.
- 5.3 The Committee congratulated LJ for getting the regulations ready, and expressed the interest in the welfare of all staff, noting if the Committee could be of assistance, they can support.
- 5.4 Committee members gave feedback on the regulations:
- Easier to read compared to the previous iteration
  - Language appears more accessible
  - Clear procedure to follow
  - Beneficial to have a flow chart for ease of use
- 5.5 **Action: LJ to consider the feedback provided by the Committee.**
- 5.6 It was confirmed that the regulations are due to go into the Handbook, which will provide definitions and an index. The scope has been widened to cover all adults, not just limited to those more vulnerable with higher risk.
- 5.7 Members of the Committee deliberated the reinforcement for the requirement of the CPD and mandatory training for the Safeguarding Officer and Welfare Officer within the regulations.
- 5.8 **Action: LJ to confirm whether the regulations were the appropriate place to prescribe the requirements of CPDs and mandatory training.**
- 5.9 It was acknowledged that time frames of the complaints process are shorter than at present, however the Committee still considered the time frames extensive. There is to be messaging for the interpretation to readers, to ensure users are aware that the time frames are the *maximum* and should not be exceeded.
- 5.10 The Committee suggested a guide to note the process to resolve issues before it reaches the stage of a complaint.

5.11 Regards to an appeal of a complaint, the requirements include not having discussion with the original panel to ensure complete independence. LJ confirmed that this is not in the regulations but is written into the Terms of Reference for compliance purposes rather than a regulation point.

5.12 It was deemed the regulations have the full support from the Oversight Committee.

## **6. Report of progress on the HoA plan**

6.0.1 The Committee noted a more complete and succinct learnings column within the HoA plan. The Chair reiterated the emphasis for an outcome rather than just process to be detailed.

6.0.2 LJ reported to the Committee on actions that were marked as '*not on track*' within the plan.

6.0.3 Line 70 – Develop and launch Swim England Safeguarding Refresher module: There has been a two-week delay due to departmental timings conflict. However, this action will be complete in December.

6.0.4 Line 93 – Develop the Adult Safeguarding policy: The Wavepower document has been created which acts as the overarching safeguarding policy. This is due to go to the Board for final sign off on 12 December.

6.0.5 LJ further added that the CPSU (Child Protection in Sport Unit) have provided feedback and recommended to embed processes already in place for 2024, rather than produce more actions. In addition, the CPSU have stated they are very satisfied with the progress that has been made.

6.0.6 The Chair agreed with the notion to embed actions rather than create more, emphasising that a time of stability was necessary after periods of change.

### **6.1 HoA Sport Development actions**

6.1.1 AW focused on actions within the plan that are led by the Sport Development Directorate.

6.1.2 Line 62 – Implement 'The Deal' for all clubs: AW explained this action is to manage the relationship between club, committees, coaches and parents. Currently seeking to re-brand from 'The Deal' to avoid confusion, and to label the project as something more easily understood. This action has been scoped because it was highlighted on the Club Health Tracker that conflict exists between these user groups. The project will help all parties by outlining key components, adopting best practice, and consider how best to foster these relationships. Upon reflection, the initial due date was unrealistic given the amount of work and consultation that must take place and therefore the end of April 2024 is a more plausible completion date.

6.1.3 Line 63 – Coach Certification review: The purpose of this action is to assist coaches in their understanding of a positive culture in clubs and programmes. Through embedding and changing behaviours in practice within the completion of the coaching certification as a start of a Coach's journey and development. This will be reviewed across all sports positioning the message to coaches and building trust between Swim England and the coaching community. A full review has taken place within swimming, which will be finalised by January 2024. A technical group has been formed for the Diving review, to be used for feedback on how to deliver the process. Reviews will take place for the other aquatic disciplines near after.

6.1.4 Line 92 – Affiliation standards for clubs operated by third parties: This has been complete for private schools, with the success being the development can be applied to any school. Operators are now being looked at. AW confirmed that upon reflection, it would have been more beneficial if the order of initiating contact with third parties would have been different, with Universities being first as they are more flexible and Swim England already have a relationships in terms of training programmes.

## **7. Employee satisfaction survey results**

7.1 MC gave a presentation to the Committee of the Team Engagement Survey Results 2023 for Swim England.

- 7.2 The presentation included:
- Explaining the difference between satisfaction and engagement
  - Outlining the purpose of the survey
  - Specific results of the survey
  - A focus on the highest and lowest scoring themes
  - Action planning as a response to the survey results
- 7.3 Discussion arose from the information provided, centered around the leadership team to take on more workload to relieve pressure from staff. MC welcomed feedback regarding this with suggestions of how to ensure SLT do not also hold too much pressure.
- 7.4 **Action: KG and MC to have a meeting to discuss feedback and suggestions of SLT and workload balance.**
- 7.5 The Committee congratulated the Swim England for their achievements that came out as a part of the engagement survey, and encouraged sharing challenges as well as the highlights within the organisation.
- 7.6 SLT members on the Committee stated the regulations had been a priority for Swim England, which have now been complete. However, it was felt that support mechanisms need to be put in place short term, to relieve the pressures employees face. This needed to be an active process considered by SLT.
- 7.7 The Chair reiterated that the Oversight Committee provides options that Swim England can decide if the suggestions would work in the business. The Committee does not advise or instruct.
- 8. 2024 meeting dates**
- 8.1 Members discussed meeting dates for 2024.
- 8.2 The following have been decided, in line with the existing Governance calendar and ToRs:
- Tuesday 30 January
  - Wednesday 6 March
  - Wednesday 15 May
  - Wednesday 26 June
  - Wednesday 28 August
  - Wednesday 27 November
- 9. Simplification**
- 9.1 Matters of simplification have been addressed through the agenda.
- 10. Participant engagement**
- 10.1 Participant engagement had been considered throughout the agenda.
- 11. AOB**
- 11.1 **Cultural reflection**
- Committee members were satisfied that it had been a positive meeting with evidence of good progress being made. Members deciphered the purpose of the Oversight Committee to provide a supporting role in checking and challenging Swim England. Members shared a general concern regarding the pressures on staff.