

# Water Polo Leadership Group

7<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Time: 18:30

**Attendees:**

Ian Mackenzie (IM)	Chair/ SOC Representative
Chris Stephens (CS)	Officials Lead
Craig Figes (CF)	Swim England Water Polo Programme Lead
Steve Kinloch (SK)	Communications Lead
Paul Metcalf (PM)	Support Competition Lead
Ekaterina Boyd (EB)	Swim England Head of Events
Becky Walker (BW)	Swim England Club Growth & Programmes Manager
Helen Weeks (HW)	Swim England Governance and Welfare Manager
Gareth Picken (GP)	Swim England Development Team Administrator

**Additional attendees:**

Richard Blackshaw (RB)	Swim England Head of Performance
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**Apologies:**

Mike Hesketh (MH)	Competition Lead
Adam Older (AO)	Joint Officials Lead
Claire Coleman (CC)	Swim England Head of Development

<b>AGENDA</b>	
1.	<b>Welcome</b>
	IM welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2.	<b>Apologies</b>
	Apologies were received from: Claire Coleman Mike Hesketh Adam Older
3.	<b>Conflict of Interest</b>
	There were no conflicts of interest.
4.	<b>Action Log</b>
	Actions were either complete or updated.
5.	<b>Development Update</b>
	HW provided an update to the paper distributed to the group.  Governance:

	<p>Governance workshops are continuing with the Chairs and Welfare Officer course being mandatory. Additionally, a SwimMark review will be taking place in 2024. More details will be shared at the next meeting.</p> <p>Club and Operator Relationships: The financial forum will be held on the 27<sup>th</sup> February, open to everyone and will include guest speakers. Additionally, the Club Health Tracker is due to close later this month.</p> <p>Club Growth &amp; Programmes: Work has begun on the Growth Toolkit that will be launched later in the year. Consultation with a range of clubs will take place to support content creation.</p> <p>Volunteering team: The Ripple Effect Project has been developed with a good club guide to engaging disabled volunteers due to be launched by end of May. Two Ripple Effect volunteers have been shortlisted at the Sport and Recreation Alliance awards.</p> <p>In addition;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Claire has returned from maternity leave this week and will be working four days a week initially.</li> <li>- Craig McCulloch has been appointed as Head of Coaching and will begin on the 15<sup>th</sup> February.</li> <li>- HW presented an overview of the Working Together project. The group was asked to make suggestions to IM of coaches that would be willing to be part of the consultation for the project.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: Group to send suggestions to IM.</b></p>
6.	<p><b>Events and Calendar Update</b></p>
	<p>CF explained that the WP events calendar continues to have clashes, particularly between NAG's finals and BWPL play offs which has results in clubs having to prioritise.</p> <p>CF agreed with CS request to be involved in conversations about the competition calendar.</p> <p>EB suggested that the competition calendar for 2025 needs to be discussed and planned over the coming months.</p> <p>Furthermore, CF raised that during training camps, coach development opportunities take place now to maximise the contact time.</p>

	<b>Action - CF to meet with EB and CS for initial competition calendar discussions.</b>
7.	<b>Growth Update</b>
	<p>BW introduced herself to the group and began by providing an update to the video project. Unfortunately, this is on hold as the project aimed to attract those in 'Learn to Swim' into Water Polo, however there is currently no method of communication between SE and the parents of 'Learn to Swim' children so this is being explored further.</p> <p>The Schools Water Project report has been sent to IM for initial read through ahead of its release to the group, with the focus now on the outcomes of the project.</p> <p>Finally, BW referenced a paper circulated ahead of the meeting regarding the barriers and opportunities within Water Polo. This is part of a wider Growth Team project and BW has asked for the contributions of all leadership groups. The group agreed to report back with ideas and suggestions.</p>
8.	<b>Talent Update</b>
	<p>CF updated the group on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The progression of the senior women's team at the World Aquatics Championships in Doha.</li> <li>- A DISE weekend is due to take place later in February with the senior men's team, under 19's and under 18's.</li> <li>- Nick Humes has agreed to stay as head coach of the senior men's team.</li> <li>- The talent centre based in Hucknall has now been relocated to Rotherham.</li> <li>- Under 19's girls are training ahead of the European championships in the summer.</li> </ul> <p>RB and IM highlighted the effort provided by British Swimming and Swim England and how it is showing in the performances of the teams.</p>
9.	<b>Club Update</b>
	Update to be provided at the next meeting.
10	<b>Communications update</b>
	SK mentioned that there was no key elements to report on.
11	<b>Strategy Update</b>
	Update to be provided at the next meeting.

12	<b>Coach Representative</b>
	<p>IM asked the group if they had any suggestions for the Coach representative for the WPLG.</p> <p>No suggestions were offered.</p> <p><b>Action – All to respond to IM.</b></p>
13	<b>Officials</b>
	<p>CS mentioned that the recent referees' course update session had approximately 100 people sign up and between 100 – 150 attendees on the day.</p> <p>IM thanked CS for his effort on this course, especially on the reach that the course had.</p> <p>CS raised an email received from Mike Coles (South West region) asking whether part of the referee course could be completed via zoom to increase accessibility to the course. A trial period would take place in the South West.</p> <p>The group agreed with the proposal for a trial period.</p> <p><b>Action - CS to progress with the development of the zoom elements of the course.</b></p>
14	<b>AOB</b>
	<p>EB raised that one club has booked their place on the NAG's finals however, due to a clash with BWPL, where they face relegation; the club has decided to focus on the BWPL play-offs. This has left a space open in the NAG's finals. The group discussed and agreed that the next placed team in the same NAG's group would be offered the place and that the original team would not be fined.</p> <p>SK cited the lack of Water Polo content on the British Swimming website. IM mentioned that this would be something he would look into.</p> <p><b>Action: IM to raise website content with relevant SE team.</b></p>
15	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>
	<p>3<sup>rd</sup> of April (with regional attendance)</p> <p>Meeting closed at 20:00</p>