

# Water Polo Leadership Group

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2024

**Time: 18:30**

## **Attendees:**

Ian Mackenzie (IM)	Chair
Steve Kinloch (SK)	Communications Lead
Chris Stephens (CS)	Officials Lead
Craig Figes (CF)	Swim England Water Polo Programme Lead
Ekaterina Boyd (EB)	Swim England Head of Events
Claire Coleman (CC)	Swim England Head of Development
Gareth Picken (GP)	Swim England Development Team Administrator

## **Regional Representatives:**

Mike Coles (MC)	South West Region
Rosa Gallop (RG)	South East Region
Nigel Greenwood (NG)	West Midlands Region
Vicky Alderson (VA)	North East Region
Luke Brown (LB)	North West Region
Fina Martinez (FM)	East Midlands Region
Adrian Wood (AW)	London Region
Fiona Conway (FC)	East Midlands Club Development Officer

## **Apologies:**

Group members:	
Paul Metcalf	Support Competition Lead
Mike Hesketh	Competition Lead

Regional representatives:	
Gabby Williams (VA attended on behalf of GW)	North East Region
Dean Walker	East Region

<b>Standing Items</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>
	IM welcomed everyone to the meeting.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Apologies</b>
	Apologies were received by Paul Metcalf, Mike Hesketh, Gabby Williams and Dean Walker.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Conflict of Interest</b>
	There were no conflicts of interest.
<b>4.</b>	<b>Minutes of Regional Representatives meeting 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023 &amp; Actions</b>
	<p>MC noted that action 4.2 should have be South West not just South. “The South West has 1283 accredited members”.</p> <p><b>Action – IM to send GP the coaches numbers to be circulated for GP to circulate.</b></p> <p>AW raised action 5.2 (the age of the learners on coaching courses). IM agreed to pick this action up with the group.</p> <p><b>Action – IM to review action 5.2 with the WPLG.</b></p> <p>MC asked CF for a list of the athletes in the Talent Centres. All regions agreed that this would be helpful.</p> <p><b>Action – CF to prepare lists for distribution.</b></p>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Regional Round-up</b>
	<p>London – the region is beginning inter-regional training for under the 16’s squads. Clubs are doing well in the preparation of National Age Groups Championships later this month.</p> <p>East Midlands - FM has resigned as regional water polo chair last week. The region is struggling to find pool time. FM has tried to put on regional training opportunities, however engagement with the clubs is a struggle.</p> <p>FC contributed that clubs are mentioning to the regional team that the combination of the Talent Centres and the regional development days is too much for athletes and subsequently regional development days are being sacrificed.</p> <p><b>Action – FC, FM, CF &amp; CC to meet around the support that can be offered to the East Midlands and the development of girls teams.</b></p> <p>North East - VA raised that the North East is struggling with the Talent Centre calendars which are often on a Friday/ Saturday, particular regarding the distances that athletes are having to travel to attend.</p>

	<p>North West - LB introduced himself as the new North West regional representative. The region is struggling with a number of clubs closing in recent years.</p> <p>South East - RG raised that due to the size of the region, some athletes are having to travel hours for training. The region is advertising for a regional Water Polo manager. RG suggested that the regional boundaries should be reconsidered and the regions more geographically proportionate.</p> <p><b>Action – IM, CC &amp; CF to work on how the Water Polo Pathway is detailed for new players in all regions.</b></p> <p>South West - MC mentioned that the region is hosting a referee’s course at the beginning of May. This has been advertised with South Wales (through Swim Wales) and for clubs in Hampshire.</p> <p>MC asked that if the National Age Group Championships dates could be released a year in advance as the Regional Championships are booked that far in advance and this would avoid clashes.</p> <p>West Midlands – NG mentioned that the regions hosts yearly festival days. The boys’ team have weekly regional training and the girls train once a month. NG seconded MC’s request for the NAG dates to be released earlier. The region hopes to hold a few international camps during the year.</p>
6.	<b>Swim England Staffing update</b>
	<p>CC highlighted a number of changes within the Swim England (SE) Sport Directorate; these included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ally White joined SE as Sport Development Directorate.</li> <li>- Richard Blackshaw has been appointed Head of Performance.</li> <li>- Rose Younger has left SE as the Water Polo talent officer. Andy McGinty remains in post.</li> <li>- CC has returned as Head of Development after being on maternity leave.</li> <li>- Craig McCulloch has recently come into post as Head of Coaching replacing Lindsey Trimmings.</li> <li>- Andy Salmon has recently joined SE as the new Chief Executive Officer.</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, since the last meeting, the Listening Report has been published. CC recommended that everyone reads the executive summary as a minimum which can be found in the first seventeen pages.</p>
7.	<b>Calendar</b>

	CF noted that the calendar is primarily finished for this year and development for the 2025 calendar is taking place. In most cases, the dates for events have been finalised but the venues are to be confirmed.
<b>8.</b>	<b>Coach Representative on WPLG</b>
	IM asked the regional representatives to offer suggestions of those who could fill the vacancy. The regional representatives agreed.  <b>Action – CC to develop the requirements for the role.</b> <b>Action – GP to advertise the position on the SE website.</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Officials – General update</b>
	CS asked the regions to contact him if they want to organise Table Official or Referee course.  <b>Action – CS to send through the link to GP to send out to the regions.</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>AOB</b>
	There were no additional items of business. IM thanked the regions for attending the meeting.  The regional representatives left the meeting.
<b>11.</b>	<b>Date of Next Regional Representatives Meeting 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024</b>

<b>Standing Items WPLG Members meeting 19:30 – 20:00</b>	
<b>12.</b>	<b>Action Log as at 24<sup>th</sup> February 2024</b>
	Actions were either completed or an update was provided.  <b>Action – SK to review the Water Polo content on the website.</b>
<b>13.</b>	<b>Events</b>
	EB reminded the group that NAGs will be taking place in Gloucester. There will be new branding for the competition. Andy Salmon and Ally White will be attending the event.  There was a discussion around whether competitions should be open to Northern Ireland clubs who come under an all-Ireland National Body.  IM suggested that there should be England only medals and Competition medals which would be open for all Home Nations.  The group concluded that there needs to be a competition review.

	<b>Action – CF, EB and IM to progress the Competition Conditions review.</b>
<b>14.</b>	<b>People Plan update</b>
	The feedback received last week has been submitted into a working document which will be incorporated into a full plan. This plan is to be circulated to the leadership groups on its release later in the year.
<b>15.</b>	<b>AOB</b>
	<p>SK asked the group, based on the East Midlands comments earlier in the meeting, where the regions fit into the development of Water Polo.</p> <p>CC responded that the regional agreements are currently being updated as they last restructured in 2020. There are conversations as to how SE and the regions work together.</p> <p>CC further mentioned that feedback received by parents highlighted there is a perception that anyone joining the discipline has to go into the talent pathway and enter competitions; there is no accommodation to just participate for fun. This is a perception that the discipline needs to address.</p>
<b>16.</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024</b>
	Meeting closed at: 20:24