

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

25 March, 1pm

Zoom

## **Present:**

Richard Hookway – RH (Chair)  
Andy Salmon – AS  
Ali Breadon – AB  
Aysha Kidwai – AK  
Barry Saunders – BSa  
Bernard Simkins – BSi

Brian Havill – BH  
Caroline Green - CG  
Joan Wheeler – JW  
Katie Walcott – KW  
Neil Booth – NB  
Lois Jarvis – LJ

## **Officers in attendance:**

Emma Griffin (Chief Operating Officer, item 6)  
Hannah Foster (Executive Operations Manager)  
Leanne Brace (Head of Memberships, item 13)

## **SECTION 1: ADMINISTRATION**

### **1. Welcome and apologies**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all members to the meeting and outlined the agenda.
- 1.2 It was noted that no apologies had been received prior to the meeting.
- 1.3 The Board officially welcomed AS for joining the Swim England Board as CEO.
- 1.4 The Chair initiated a discussion regarding the potential resignation of the Chair and/or any number of Board members following the publication of the Listening report. Several Board members, including the Chair stated that they would be prepared to stand down if it was agreed this would be of benefit to the organisation and to the sports. Following a thorough discussion, it was unanimously agreed that any resignations would not serve any positive purpose.

### **2. Declarations of interest**

- 2.1 The Regional roles of BSi, NB and BSa were noted.
- 2.2 There were no further declarations of interest.

### **3. Minutes of the board meeting of ASA (Swim England) Ltd – 20 February 2024**

- 3.1 Slight amendments required for minute 6.2 and 12.6 to add clarity for the reader.

- 3.2 There were no further amendments, the minutes were taken as read and approved as a true and accurate record.
4. **Actions arising from previous meetings – to note progress**
- 4.1 Reference Action 23.08 – Clarify timeline for the Commercial Strategy: AS confirmed that progress has been made but unable to provide a precise timeline as there is work with regards to capturing opportunities in meaningful ways.
- 4.2 Reference Action 24.01 – Skills matrix: BH will be attending the next Regional Chairs’ meeting in June, therefore the target date is to be amended to July.
- 4.3 Reference Action 24.03 – Update on timelines of cases: LJ provided an update in agenda item 11.
- 4.4 **Action: HF to add the terms of office to the meeting minutes.**
5. **Confirmation of decisions made by e-mail**
- 5.1 **Decision: The Board agreed via email for Carolyn Ryan (CR) to become a member of the Swim England Board.**
- 5.2 Members look forward to welcoming CR at the next meeting.
- 5.3 Marie Cooper (People Development Director) is currently developing the induction programme for new Board members.
- 5.4 BH and BSi will have discussions with CR to provide the current information on trading matters.

## **SECTION 2: STRATEGIC MATTERS**

6. **Listening Report**
- 6.1 Emma Griffin, Chief Operating Officer (EG) was welcomed to the meeting.
- 6.2 EG shared a presentation with Board members and discussed communication plans following the publication of the Listening report; which included team members, the media, customers and stakeholders.
- 6.3 It was confirmed that the media coverage was adverse by nature but balanced overall. It was made clear through the messaging in the media that Swim England commissioned the independent report.
- 6.4 Engagements statistics were shared with the Board stating that social media engagements were slightly higher than average after the publication. The safeguarding and welfare referrals and email communications with these departments have increased significantly, which was expected.
- 6.5 It was noted that more engagement with members is required to take our aquatics community on the culture journey with Swim England.
- 6.6 The CEO shared a presentation following discussion at SLT. It was unanimously agreed that the response to the listening report is Swim England’s number one priority.
- 6.7 The CEO shared six principles to guide our response and these were modified and agreed.

6.8 Members were asked for their approval of the following, as direct action to be taken from the Listening report:

1. Approval of Coach representation on the Oversight Committee
2. Coach representation on the recruitment panel
3. Review the Oversight Committee Terms of Reference

This was approved with the suggestion that two coaches may be appointed on to the Oversight Committee for a better representation from diverse clubs at different levels, such as development and performance club coaches. It was agreed that the number of representatives would be discussed with the Oversight Committee in line with the review of their TOR.

6.9 **Decision: The Board supported to appoint Coach representation on the Oversight Committee, include a BSCA representative on the recruitment panel and to review the Oversight Committee TOR.**

## 7. Legal Matters

7.1 The report was taken as read and LJ provided an update.

7.2 Proposed changes for regulations was shared with the Board for decision.

7.3 Members deliberated a variety of potential issues for counties and have agreed to further discuss this during a separate meeting.

7.4 **Action: A review meeting to take place to discuss prevention of potential issues within counties.**

7.5 **Decision: The Board approved the amended regulations, with the exception of 2.3.4 which will be delegated to members to discuss and come back to the Board for a decision by email.**

7.6 Changes to the terms of reference of Swim England Qualifications (SEQ) were proposed and agreed by the Board to be put forward at the AGM.

7.7 **Decision: The SEQ TOR amendments were endorsed by the Board.**

7.8 LJ confirmed the training schedules and the mandatory elements for Judicial Appointments Panel members. It was noted that hearings have migrated to be held remotely which is becoming standard procedure.

7.9 Recommended terms of office for the Judicial Appointments Panel have been proposed to reflect the governance structure within Swim England.

7.10 **Action: LJ to circulate the terms of office for Judicial Appointments Panel, for a decision to be made by the Board via email.**

## SECTION 3: ORGANISATIONAL HEALTH

### 8. Chair's report

8.1 RH gave a verbal report.

8.2 The Chair attended a meeting with the Chairs of the Home Nations and British Swimming. The re-branding of British Swimming to Aquatics GB was explained. There were discussions on future Board appointments, to which a skills matrix will be put together and we will inform them of any gaps. RH confirmed that the Listening report was covered in depth, to ensure all were clear on the context but

also to clarify that it will apply to Scotland and Wales and in the highest level of the sport.

8.3 It was recognised that there has been a lot of media focused on the Listening report, with several reports calling for the Swim England Board and/or Chair to resign.

8.4 Members agreed that the outcome needed to reflect what is right for the aquatic sports and its participants. It was stated that Swim England needs to drive the change that is required with appropriate pace and seriousness across all disciplines, including lower and higher levels of the sport.

## 9. **CEO's report**

9.1 The report was taken as read and AS provided an update.

9.2 The CEO noted several early observations of the organisation.

9.3 The Board discussed a collaborative working approach with Aquatics GB to establish who takes lead in water polo and artistic swimming after the Olympics.

9.4 Support was shown for the commercial elements contained within the CEO report.

## 10. **CFO's report**

10.0.1 The report was taken as read and BH gave an update.

10.0.2 It was confirmed that the IoS income has increased by approximately 25%, which is in line with growth in the aquatic industry, while award sales had only increased by 3%.

10.0.3 The membership income has increased, but membership levels are not currently at pre-Covid levels of 2019.

10.0.4 The award sales are presently behind what they were this time last year, with the IoS being at approximately the same level as last year.

## 10.1 **Annual report**

10.1.1 The report was taken as read and BH provided a summary to members.

10.1.2 Swim England are budgeting for break even in 2024.

10.1.3 The Audit, Risk and Probity committee believed the annual report should not be signed until confirmation has been received regarding funding by Sport England.

10.1.4 **Action: The Board delegated RH and BH to sign the annual report once confirmation from Sport England was received.**

## 11. **Safeguarding and Welfare report**

11.1 The report was taken as read and LJ gave an update.

11.2 The publication of the Listening report has had an impact on the safeguarding department demonstrating an increase in calls and cases. It was confirmed that another member would be required to support the team. In addition, the department has found this time period particularly difficult as they have received numerous counts of abuse. External support has been highlighted as available to the team and their attendance of this support is mandatory.

- 11.3 It was noted that there is zero tolerance of abuse, harassment, threats, and any behaviour of that nature to staff. The Chair noted that if any threats are made to employees the police are to be informed. The Board discussed additional support to prevent abuse including raising points of 'no tolerance of abuse' on the Swim England website and making callers aware if calls are being recorded.
- 11.4 **Action: LJ to explore whether calls are being/can be recorded for the safety of staff.**
- 11.5 A discussion arose following concerns with cultures not being receptive of whistleblowing. It was stated that insight is to be undertaken from a variety of organisations within the aquatics industry in relation to anonymous feedback for challenges, culture, and any reported negative behaviour.
- 11.6 It was explained that gaining reports and data from Globocol, Swim England's safeguarding and welfare case management system, can be difficult, which has encouraged conversations with Globocol to improve efficiency.
12. **Affiliation Category proposal**
- 12.1 The Chair welcomed Leanne Brace, Head of Memberships (LB) to the meeting.
- 12.2 The paper was taken as read and LB confirmed that the proposal aims to simplify the categories in order to be aligned with governance standards.
- 12.3 JW confirmed that the Sport Operations Committee (SOC) support the proposal.
- 12.4 Members discussed the proposal and raised questions concerning support for affiliates and the criteria. It was stated that individuals will be supported by the national affiliation and a fee has been factored in for this. The criteria includes the minimum governance standards, which are currently being drafted by the Sport Development department.
- 12.5 **Decision: The affiliation categories were approved by the Board.**
- 12.6 Once drafted, the criteria containing the minimum governance standards will go to SOC and Swim England Board.

#### **SECTION 4: SUBSIDIARY AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

13. **Committee / Working Group reports - meetings held since last meeting**
- 13.1 **Remunerations Committee held 23 February 2024**
- 13.1.1 KW provided a verbal update.
- 13.1.2 The Committee approved the pay award being a fixed pay increase of 5% to all employees. Marie Cooper (People Development Director) provided employee's pay bands from previous years. It was additionally proposed to give delegate authority to AS and the SLT to ensure all employees are in the correct band within the pay framework.
- 13.1.3 **Decision: The Board approved the 5% pay increase to all employees, and to move individuals in line with their payment band.**
- 13.1.4 It was noted that the Gender Pay Gap report will be circulated via email to Board members for email approval in April.

13.1.5 The Remunerations Committee put forward the proposal to change the remit to the 'People Committee' to broaden the scope of the remunerations.

13.1.6 **Decision: Board members approved the change from the Remunerations Committee to the People Committee.**

13.2 **Regional Chairs' held 5 March 2024**

13.2.1 RH gave a verbal update.

13.2.2 The Regional Chairs looked at their purpose, agreed priorities, confirmed individual responsibilities, and explored resources required in order to work in a more collaborative manner.

13.2.3 A discussion took place on governance and ways in which to progress.

13.2.4 The meeting reviewed the Listening report and invited Regional Chairs to share their initial thoughts and reactions, whilst equipping them with appropriate information.

13.3 **Sport Operations Committee held 5 March 2024**

13.3.1 The meeting minutes were taken as read. There were no further questions from the Board.

13.4 **Institute of Swimming Board held 12 March 2024**

13.4.1 BH provided a verbal update.

13.4.2 It was stated that a donation is to be paid to a holding company. The level of the donation will be finalised in May.

13.4.3 The IoS Board discussed a potentially challenging budget having grown by 25% since last year. There were several organisational structure challenges that have been addressed.

13.5 **Audit, Risk and Probity Committee held 19 March 2024**

13.5.1 AB gave a verbal update.

13.5.2 The Committee largely discussed items that have been covered during the meeting.

13.5.3 It was confirmed that the year-end audit went smoothly with limited issues.

13.6 **Oversight Committee**

13.6.1 It was noted that there has not been an Oversight Committee meeting to report on, and therefore an update will be provided at the next meeting.

## **SECTION 5: CLOSE**

14. **Dates for next meetings (2024)**

Monday 20 May (AGM)	7.30pm – 9.30pm	(remote)
Tuesday 21 May	11am – 6.30pm	(in person)
Tuesday 9 July	1pm – 4.30pm	(remote)
Tuesday 17 September	11am – 5pm	(in person)
Monday 16 December	1pm – 4.30pm	(remote)

15. **Any other business**

15.1 Members briefly discussed the relationship with Aquatics GB to ensure priorities align.

- 15.2 There was an agreement for a further discussion on the relationships with the regions.

## Summary of Decisions made

Minute	Item	Decision
5.1	Confirmation of decisions made by e-mail	The Board agreed via email for Carrie Ryan to become a member of the Swim England Board
6.10	Listening report	The Board supported to appoint Coach representation on the Oversight Committee, include a BSCA representative on the recruitment panel and to review the Oversight Committee TOR
7.5	Legal Matters	The Board approved the amended regulations, with the exception of 2.3.4 which will be delegated to members to amend.
7.7	Legal Matters	The SEQ TOR amendments were endorsed by the Board
13.5	Affiliation Category proposal	The affiliation categories were approved by the Board
14.1.4	Committee / Working Group reports	The Board approved the 5% pay increase to all employees, and to move individuals in line with their payment band
14.1.7	Committee / Working Group reports	Board members approved the change from the Remunerations Committee to the People Committee

### Terms of Office

Ali Breadon  
 Aysha Kidwai  
 Barry Saunders  
 Bernard Simkins  
 Caroline Green  
 Carrie Ryan  
 Joan Wheeler  
 Katie Walcott  
 Neil Booth  
 Richard Hookway

4 year term from:

31 December 2021 (*second term*)  
 10 May 2021  
 31 December 2021  
 31 December 2020 (*second term*)  
 31 December 2021 (*second term*)  
 1 April 2024  
 31 December 2023 (*second term*)  
 1 October 2022  
 31 December 2022 (*second term*)  
 1 September 2021