

# Water Polo Leadership Group

10<sup>th</sup> December 2025

Time: 18:30 – 20:00

## Attendees:

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Ian Mackenzie (IM)	Chair
Steve Kinloch (SK)	Communications Lead
Chris Stephens (CS)	Officials Lead
Mike Hesketh (MH)	Competition Lead
Paul Metcalfe (PM)	Co-opted Member
Ekaterina Boyd (EB)	Swim England Head of Events
Craig Figes (CF)	Swim England Water Polo Programme Lead
Richard Blackshaw (RB)	Swim England Head of Performance
Claire Coleman (CC)	Swim England Head of Development
Gareth Picken (GP)	Swim England Development Team Administrator

Minutes	
<b>25.26</b>	<b>Welcome</b>
	IM welcomed everyone to the last meeting of the year.
<b>25.27</b>	<b>Conflict of Interest</b>
	There were no conflicts of interest raised during the meeting.
<b>25.28</b>	<b>Action Log</b>
	Updates on the actions recorded in the log were provided to the group.
<b>25.29</b>	<b>SOC Update</b>
	The minutes circulated ahead of the meeting were from the September meeting. The last SOC meeting took place yesterday, however the minutes from the meeting are yet to be published.  CC confirmed that meetings with Craig McCulloch are continuing to support the development of 'Flourishing in Coaching', which includes the redesigning of the coaching curriculum. Further information will be circulated to the leadership group in due course.
<b>25.30</b>	<b>Sports Development Report</b>
	The report was circulated ahead of the meeting.  There is a new style development report as it now covers the work of two directorates.  No questions were asked.
<b>25.31</b>	<b>Water Polo update</b>
	CF updated the group on the development of the DTE coach communication improvements in partnership with Everyone Active, University of Birmingham and SE SSM.

	<p>The new season started with the Talent Games during which friendly games took place.</p> <p>Trials have been completed under the new selection policy.</p> <p>The under 20's squads are in preparation for the Europeans.</p> <p>The senior men are preparing for the EU Nations Cup.</p> <p>The senior women preparation for European Championships in Funchal, Maderia.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that there is a large financial and time commitment from the athletes and volunteers.</p> <p>IM asked what the commitment is from Swim England.</p> <p>RB explained that he would present the financial commitment for international competitions.</p> <p>IM further asked that the minutes of the Water Polo summit need to be sent to the group.</p> <p>RB recognised that the minutes of the event were shared with the participants who attended the event.</p> <p><b>Action: RB to present the financial figures to the group</b>  <b>Action: RB to circulate a summary of the Summit</b></p>
<b>25.33</b>	<b>Events Update</b>
	<p>EB updated the group that the under 17's and under 19's NAG's will be open for entries from the 17<sup>th</sup> December and close on the 7<sup>th</sup> January. Information on the competition will be published tomorrow (11<sup>th</sup> December). The finals will take place at GL1, Gloucester between the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> May.</p> <p>The under 15's NAG's have just taken place in Coventry and Manchester.</p> <p>CS outlined changes due to take place in the British Water Polo League which would elongate the season.</p> <p>CC raised whether these changes had been discussed wider to evaluate the impact and what consideration had been given to the Competition Review.</p> <p>MH explained this was agreed at last year's BWPL AGM, however as the implementation isn't scheduled until 2027, there are still discussions to be had.</p> <p><b>Action – EB to speak with Dave Andrew.</b></p>
<b>25.34</b>	<b>Coaching Update</b>
	This item has been postponed to the next meeting.
<b>25.35</b>	<b>Communications Update</b>
	There were no updates from SK.
<b>25.36</b>	<b>Officials Update</b>
	CS explained to the group that the Female Referee Development Programme which the group was going to call 'Making Waves' is now 'Women who Whistle'. There won't be a big launch but gradually introduced.

	<b>Action: SK to work with the Communications Teams to raise awareness</b>
<b>25.37</b>	<b>AOB</b>
	<p>The South East region <b>would like to promote</b> the lower age groups but need support as to how to do this. IM will respond to their request.</p> <p>CC raised that Swim England has received an application to affiliate from a new Water Polo league called GBR Origins League. CC asked the group whether the league be accepted and affiliated to Swim England. The group agreed that they would need time to review the application and further information from the league in addition to their application.</p> <p><b>Action: Application to be considered at the next WPLG meeting</b></p>
<b>25.38</b>	<b>Dates of the next meeting</b>
	11th February 2026