

# Meeting of the Sports Operations Committee (SOC)

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026 10:30am – 1:30pm

**Venue: TEAMS**

Members	Initials	Mtg 1 27.01.26	Mtg 2 03.03.26	Mtg 3 28.04.26	Mtg 4	Mtg 5
Joan Wheeler, Swim England Board Member (Chair)	JW	✓	✓			
Neil Booth, Swim England Board Member	NB	A	A			
Amy Bryant, Swim England Member	AB	✓	✓			
Ellie Conway, Youth Advisory Panel Representative	EC	X	A			
Alex Harrison, Swim England Member	AH	A	✓			
John Hidle, Regional Chairs Representative	JH	✓	✓			
Keith Munday, Swim England Board Member	KM	✓	✓			
Richard Palmer-Jones, Swim England Member	RPJ	✓	✓			
Jo Sackett, Swim England Member	JS	✓	✓			
Alex Williams, Swim England Member	AWi	✓	✓			
Helen Marney, Director of Community Participation & Health	HM	✓	✓			
Ally White, Director of Sports	AWh	✓	P			

Non-members in attendance on 03.03.2026:

Claire Coleman	CC	✓
Ekaterina Boyd, Head of Events (Item 5 only)	EB	✓
Sarah Green, Head of Aquatics Training & Education (Item 8 only)	SG	✓

Key: ✓ = Present, A = Apologies given, P = Partial attendance, X = Non-attendance



<b>STANDING ITEMS: ADMINISTRATION</b>	
1.1 and 1.2	<p><b>Welcome and apologies</b></p> <p>Apologies received from NB who is engaged in Commonwealth Games duties. AH had sent apologies for lateness and would join the meeting as soon as possible.</p>
1.3	<p><b>Declarations of interest</b></p> <p>No declarations were made. Members were reminded to declare any arising conflicts.</p>
1.4	<p><b>Declarations of AOB</b></p> <p>None.</p>
1.5	<p><b>Minutes of the SOC meeting held 27.01.2026</b></p> <p>Minutes of the SOC meeting held 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026 were approved.</p>
1.6	<p><b>Actions arising from the meeting held on 27.01.2026</b></p> <p>Action log updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Action 4:</b> CLG structural update completed.</li> <li>• <b>Action 11:</b> slides and working group set up in progress (Helen)</li> </ul>
<b>SECTION 2: STRATEGIC MATTERS</b>	
2.	<p><b>Swim England Org Structure/Communication Plan - Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structural redesign driven by strategy, listening report and operational needs.</li> <li>• CPH reorganised into four strands; 11 vacancies currently impacting on delivery.</li> <li>• Majority of participation/social impact work funded by Sport England.</li> <li>• In the discussion that followed the committee expressed the view that there was more that could be done in terms of communication with clubs and members and suggested that an infographic on “Where membership money goes” be considered.</li> <li>• There was a need for stronger, clearer, repeated member communications.</li> <li>• It was agreed to ask the Communications team to present at next SOC meeting.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> Head of Communications to attend the next meeting</p>
3.	<p><b>Governance Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HN reported on the current review of governance, which was looking at a range of areas of governance, including the Board and committees but also regions and counties.</li> <li>• Review has highlighted the need for clearer decision structures, aligned ToR, and distinction between governance and stakeholder forums.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With regard to SOC, the views of the committee would be sought on the ToR, agendas and meeting content. Members were asked to consider these areas in the light of the One Swim England Strategy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> Questionnaire to be issued next week for SOC consultation (HM/AWh), SOC members to respond (All)</p>
4.	<p><b>Club Support &amp; Development Framework &amp; Club Health Tracker</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Framework shifts approach from compliance-led to supportive.</li> <li>• Universal offer: toolkits, affiliation, digital content.</li> <li>• Localised support: multi-club sessions, proactive meetings, competition presence</li> <li>• Volunteer education to sit with SEQ.</li> <li>• Club Operations Database introduced to centralise engagement logs.</li> <li>• Club Health Tracker: ~17% completion; facility access main red flag.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> explore production of simple graphic explaining “Where your money goes.”</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Circulate slides; add Alex Williams to working group. (HM)</p> <p><b>Club Health Tracker Rollout</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> Increase completion rate; embed into club engagement work (CC)</p> <p><b>Affiliation Model Review</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> Review current affiliation structure incl. 60-day consultation period (CC).</p>
5.	<p><b>Competition Review</b></p> <p>Ekaterina Boyd joined the meeting to report on progress with the current competition review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ~4000 responses across all disciplines.</li> <li>• Key motivations: health, enjoyment, improvement, socialisation</li> <li>• Issues: communication delays, financial burden, event duration/scheduling.</li> <li>• Water polo reports least satisfaction with structure.</li> <li>• Steering group to be formed; SOC rep required.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> JW to email SOC members to invite expressions of interest. SOC members to respond if willing to join the steering group.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Establish group (including SOC rep) and initiate deep-dive phase (EB).</p>
6.	<p><b>Directorate Reports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summit will take place on 19<sup>th</sup> March and attendance has already reached target (300). Majority operators/swim schools.</li> <li>• Comms improvements expected with new leadership.</li> <li>• Report now structured by four strategic strands.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With regard to the Coaching Workshops AW asked whether specific workshops were planned for those from minority backgrounds. As AWh had left the meeting JW would ask him to reply to AW on this point.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: Evaluation report on Summit to be presented to SOC in due course.</b></p> <p><b>Action: AWh to reply to AW on Coaching Workshops.</b></p>
7.	<p><b>Health and Safety Forum</b></p> <p>KM reported on the recent meeting of the Health and Safety Forum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forum restructuring: quarterly deep dives; first on medical cover/security.</li> <li>Noted difference between minimum H&amp;S requirement and reputational protection.</li> <li>Concern: underreported spinal stress injuries in diving; need improved reporting.</li> <li>Collaboration required between Howdens, H&amp;S, SEQ and Club Support.</li> </ul> <p><b>Incident Reporting Improvements</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> Develop clearer expectations for clubs on incident &amp; near-miss reporting (KM/CC)</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Establish improved centralised reporting model (beyond Howdens) (KM/CC)</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Investigate reporting gaps re. spinal stress fractures in diving (AWh).</p>
8.	<p><b>Evergreen Update</b></p> <p>Sarah Green joined the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Level 2 launched; strong uptake (~60 learners on first courses).</li> <li>Level 1 now optional, not mandatory.</li> <li>Some Level 1 learners seeking goodwill due to timing; ATCs encouraged to offer concessions.</li> <li>Digital systems partly implemented; full e-portfolio expected 2026.</li> <li>SEQ team under pressure due to vacancies.</li> </ul> <p>In the discussion that followed the issue of those recently qualifying as Level 1 feeling that they had wasted the course fee was discussed. It was accepted that this was a short term problem, had been an inevitable consequence of the change and any solution was not in the control of Swim England.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Provide guidance to Approved Training Centres on goodwill gestures for recent L1 learners transitioning to L2 (SG)</p> <p><b>Evergreen Rollout Tracking</b></p> <p><b>Action:</b> Provide update on digital system readiness and educator support (SG).</p>
<p><b>SECTION 3: COMMITTEE/LEADERSHIP GROUP REPORTS/MEETINGS HELD SINCE LAST SOC MEETING</b></p> <p>(to be taken as read – questions only)</p>	

9.1	<b>Artistic Swimming LG – meeting held 27.01.2026</b>
	AB raised the need for wider consultation on grading (beyond NAGs). (CC)
9.2	<b>Club LG – meeting held 02.02.2026</b>
	AB reported on the following issues, discussed as the CLG. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staffing changes</li> <li>• Affiliation model review ongoing.</li> </ul>
9.3	<b>Diving LG</b>
	No major updates.
9.4	<b>Swimming LG</b>
	No major updates.
9.5	<b>Water Polo LG</b>
	No update available.
9.6	<b>Masters Swimming – meeting held 29.01.2026</b>
	It was agreed that Alex Williams should replace Neil Booth as the SOC Liaison to the Masters Swimming Leadership Group. JW would advise the Chair of the MSLG.  <b>Action: JW to advise the Chair of the MSLG and introduce AW.</b>
9.7	<b>Youth Advisory Panel</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structural issues to be reviewed</li> <li>• Clarity on remit</li> </ul> <p>It was noted that EC had been unable to attend recent SOC meetings, leaving the committee without any input from the YAP.</p> <p><b>Action: JW and CC to discuss the way forward</b></p>
<b>SECTION 4: CLOSE</b>	
10.	<b>Regional Update</b>
	JW reported on the Regional Chairs meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairs supportive of the proposed judicial system changes.</li> <li>• John Hidle stepping down as SOC representative; Stuart Murray to succeed.</li> <li>• JW thanked JH for his services to SOC and for his valuable input at meetings.</li> </ul>
	<b>Any other business</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Next SOC meeting: 28 April (in person), SportPark, 10:30am</li> </ul>

Meeting closed.