



**Swim England East Region
Minutes of the Board of Directors
13th May 2025 at 7pm, via Zoom**

Present	Stewart Murray (SMu)	Regional Chairman
	Keith Belton (KB)	Finance Director
	Tom Baster (TB)	Director
	Ian Mackenzie (IM)	Director
	Sheila Mackenzie (SMA)	Director
	Gerry Metcalf (GM)	Director
	Helen Stephens (HS)	Director

Also in attendance:
James Salmon (JSa) Regional Manager

25/059 Apologies and introductions

25/059.1 Apologies were received from Lottie Thompson.

25/060 Declarations of conflict of interest

25/060.1 KB declared a potential conflict of interest concerning an item in the Regional Manager's report.

25/061 Minutes

25/061.1 The minutes of the meeting on 8th April were circulated with the agenda. The minutes were approved as a true record.

25/062 Matters arising – using the Action Log

25/062.1 Stock insurance

Ongoing: KB should have time to review this now that the regional championships are complete.

25/062.2 Youth Advisory Panel

To be removed from the action log, pending review from Swim England.

25/062.3 County Forum and Members' Forum Terms of Reference (ToR)

These will need to be checked and updated following changes to the Regional Operations Committee (ROC).

25/062.4 Staff role changes

To be investigated and discussed by JSa and SMu.

25/062.5 Remuneration policy

To be discussed as a separate agenda item.



- 25/062.6 **Whistleblowing policy**
JSa to produce a policy based on Swim England's policy.
- 25/062.7 **County Governance**
Four counties have completed, and the two remaining are updating their constitutions.
- 25/062.8 **New ROC structure**
Amendments need to be made to the ToR then these will be shared – KB to action.
- 25/062.9 **Issues with the website**
Some progress has been made. JSa to follow this up.
- 25/062.10 **Cross-discipline training days**
Ongoing
- 25/062.11 **Branding**
Ongoing
- 25/062.12 **Create a spreadsheet for all Directors to confirm their availability to attend events**
This has been done and all Directors have access to this.
- 25/063 Ratification of items agreed since 8th April**
- 25/063.1 There were no items for ratification.
- 25/064 Finance**
- 25/064.1 The budget reports had been circulated, and no questions were raised.
- 25/064.2 KB stated that the current expenses policy has not been updated for several years. He was aware that, for example, that the current allowance for breakfast is not enough for a Premier Inn breakfast.
KB proposed that to keep in line with Swim England, the allowance would be increased to the following: Breakfast £12 and evening meal (excluding alcoholic drink) £25.

KB confirmed that the increase would not affect the expenses claimed. He also confirmed that all disciplines applied the same expenses policy, apart from open water, where there are some differences owing to the distance some volunteers travel.

The increase was unanimously agreed.
- Action - KB to update the finance policy from 1st June 2025 and send to all discipline managers**
- 25/064.3 KB stated that while benchmarking regional coaches pay, it is important to ensure that they are receiving more than the minimum wage. KB proposed that the rate was increased, as the minimum wage has been increased.

JSa believed that the numbers of coaches being willing to assist the Region was not dependent on the rate of pay.



TB stated that the pay rates should be reviewed every year.

KB agreed that these should be reviewed in line with the minimum wage and other factors.

The increase was unanimously agreed.

- 25/064.4 KB stated that the disciplines would not need to adjust their budget to reflect the increases for the expenses policy or coach remuneration.

25/065 Leadership Group minutes

- 25/065.1 The minutes for Disability, Diving, Masters, Swimming Officials' Group, Water Polo and the Coaches' Forum were shared prior to the meeting.

25/065.2 Disability

It was questioned why the next Disability meeting had been planned for a few days before the Disability Championships. It would be better to have the meeting at least a month before.

Action - JSa to contact Peter Winter to suggest moving the meeting forward

25/065.3 Masters

GM had some concerns with the way this Leadership Group was running, but would monitor this and report back to the Board.

25/065.4 Swimming Officials' Group

SMu asked if the changes at a national level would cascade down, GM responded that nothing has come from Swim England, so no changes are currently needed in the Region.

- 25/065.5 IM Informed the Board that there had been issues with the certificates for the National Para CPD training which was hosted by the Swim England East Region. He has taken this up with Andy Salmon.

25/065.6 Coaches' Forum

JSa reported that the feedback on the first weekend of the Regional Swimming Championships was positive.

There was a suggestion about sending a regional team to an event abroad. A proposal will be presented to the group at a meeting in a couple of weeks.

- 25/065.7 TB stated that despite the positive feedback for the Regional Swimming Championships the results show that there is a huge disparity across the Region. The medal table shows that one club received 75 gold medals. The next highest number of gold medals received by a club was 28.
TB believes that, as well as a trip abroad, something more needs to be done to help development across the Region.

25/066 East Region Strategy

- 25/066.1 A presentation was shared, showing the current work-in-progress strategy document, and feedback was asked for.



- 25/066.2 SMu advised that the feedback received following the last Board meeting has been incorporated into the strategy.
- 25/066.3 A proposed scorecard for tracking the progress of the strategy was also shared.
- 25/066.4 SMu said that the proposed timeframe is to present the strategy document to the County Forum at the meeting scheduled for 3rd June. Feedback will be requested. The document will then go to the Board on 10th June, hopefully for sign off. It can then be made public soon after that.
- 25/066.5 **Action – work-in-progress strategy document and scorecard to be shared by JSa with all Board members for their feedback**
- 25/067 Risk Register**
- 25/067.1 There have been no updates to the Risk Register.
- 25/068 Regional Manager's report**
- 25/068.1 JSa presented his report.
- 25/068.2 **Update on clubs with Learn-to-Swim (LTS)**
34 clubs had been identified with LTS sections. 25 are confirmed to be compliant. Three no longer have LTS. Work is being done with five clubs to resolve issues. One club has not responded so far.
- 25/068.2.1 The potential conflict of interest of KB and JSa on this topic was noted.
- 25/068.2.2 SMu questioned why some of the clubs had gone past their deadline to resolve the issues. JSs said that these clubs are waiting for feedback from the Swim England independent tax adviser before progressing.
- 25/068.3 **Club Affiliation**
Twenty six clubs went through the affiliation process this quarter. Unfortunately two clubs did not meet the requirements by the deadline. One club was given a short extension because of an administrative issue. The other club was suspended owing to noncompliance with Safeguarding qualifications and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. The issue was resolved, and the suspension was lifted the next day.
- 25/068.3.1 TB asked who makes the recommendation to suspend a club.
JSa replied that this is done by a group comprising a representative from each region and Swim England staff. Each club which has not met the requirements is discussed and a decision is made.
- 25/068.3.2 TB questioned if the better approach would be to state that the non-compliant members should be told that they cannot be poolside, rather than suspending the club.
JSa responded that the option to remove them from the Online Membership System (OMS) report and stop them from being poolside would have been given to them before the deadline. In this case the club did not do this.



- 25/068.4 JSa presented the DBS and Safeguarding statistics for the Region. These show an improvement over the last 12 months.

SMu asked if 100% was achievable as these figures were close. JSa stated that this was not possible, because of the way Swim England update their records.

25/069

Past President pin

- 25/069.1 KB stated that, as there are no pins in stock, more need to be ordered, so one can be presented to Past President Dean Walker.

- 25/069.2 The proposal was to purchase twenty gold pins, as this was a cost-effective amount. This was agreed.

- 25/069.3 TB asked if the pins are from the same supplier as the medals used at the Regional Swimming Championships, as the silver medals were not of a good standard and required polishing before presentation.

- 25/069.4 KB responded that the pins were from the same supplier, but they would be from a different manufacture. Also, the old stock of medals was now approximately six years old and they have deteriorated during storage.

- 25/069.5 TB believed that the condition of the newly-purchased medals was also not of acceptable quality.

Action - JSa and KB to inspect the new medals and contact the supplier if necessary

- 25/069.6 SMu pointed out that the President has a fabric badge on their blazer. It has the old ASA East Region logo rather than the Swim England East Region logo. There was an opportunity for updating the badge, while branding is being looked at.

KB believed that the old logo was kept as this matched the jewel on the President's chain of office. He suggested investigating the cost of purchasing 20 badges which could be sewn on to a blazer.

Action - JSa to get proposal and price for these

25/070

Appointment of an Independent Welfare and Safeguarding Adviser

- 25/070.1 JSa, reported that the Regional Welfare Officer, Fran Vesztrocy, would like an Independent Welfare and Safeguarding Adviser - someone from whom she can seek advice, who is independent of Swim England and sports, but has a vast knowledge of welfare and safeguarding. This would be especially useful for any difficult cases or where there is a disagreement with Swim England. It would be a volunteer role.

- 25/070.2 Some concerns were raised concerning about this.

The Region already employs a professional as the Welfare Officer and Fran works with Swim England.

Concern was expressed as to whether the advice would be truly independent.

There was also concern about the possibility of advice being given which was not in line with advice from Swim England.



25/070.3 GM commented that she had spoken to Fran about this, and she thought that the adviser would only be used on a rare occasion where Fran did not have the specialist knowledge. GM felt that it was a sensible proposal.

25/070.4 **Action - Fran to produce a formal proposal to go to the next Board meeting**

25/071 Any other urgent business

25/071.1 IM reported a delay appointing a new pool operator at Southend Leisure Centre. It will not be announced for at least another week. The issues with the diving boards are still therefore to be resolved.

25/071.2 TB thanked everybody who assisted with the Regional Swimming Championships. The Region has benefited from dozens and dozens of hours of people's time.

SMu responded by thanking TB for the countless hours he had put in to provide a regional meet of such a high standard.

25/071.3 Ahead of the Annual General Meeting (AGM), Swim England had asked to be advised of any notable bereavements within the Region over the last twelve months. Two names were put forward.

Pat Dowsett – Bedfordshire
John Peggall – Norfolk

25/071.4 SMu advised that Swim England has also asked at very short notice for a regional nomination to the Judicial Appointments Panel. He had approached an individual, but they would not be able to commit to this until September. Although an appointment can only be made at the AGM, if in September the individual feels they can commit, then Swim England will be advised of this.

25/071.5 SMu said that communication is an important part of the regional strategy. Communication must be improved and modernised, using all the platforms available to us.

TB had previously suggested using a student to help with this, but was concerned about handing over control of regional communication. He believed that the content would have to come from staff, as there needed to be accountability. A student could maybe help with creativity though, and perhaps a training course for the staff would be useful.

25/072 Confidential Items

25/072.1 No confidential items were discussed.

25/073 Date for the next Board meeting

25/073.1 The next Board meeting is on 10th June at 7pm.