

Swim England East Region
Minutes of the Board of Directors
12th August 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

Lottie Thompson (LT), Specialist

25/110 Apologies and introductions

25/110.1 No apologies were received.

25/110.2 HS advised that she will leave the meeting at 8pm.

25/111 Declarations of conflict of interest

25/111.1 There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

25/112 Minutes

25/112.1 The minutes of the meeting on 8th July, circulated with the agenda, were approved as a true record.

25/112.2 KB confirmed to SMa that the outstanding invoice for the hire of Whitlingham Lake for the Open Water Championships had been paid.

25/112.3 JSa confirmed to SMa that there had been no nominations for the Water Polo Manager position.

25/113 Matters arising – using the Action Log

25/113.1 Stock insurance

Ongoing - KB is working on a list of items to identify those which need to be insured and those which do not require insuring.

25/113.2 County Forum and Members' Forum -Terms of Reference (ToR)

JSa has produced these documents, and they have been circulated to the Board. SMa will correct some grammatical errors and return the documents to JSa.

25/113.3 In the Members' Forum ToR SMa queried whether the election of a President should be included, as well as that for a President Elect. After discussion it was decided that it should be included.

- 25/113.4 **Whistleblowing policy**
LT has made some amendments to this policy. SMa will try to send her amendments.
- 25/113.5 **County Governance**
Four counties have completed, and Essex has submitted all the documentation. This is awaiting approval.
- 25/113.6 **New Regional Operations Committee (ROC) structure**
KB has set up a doodle poll for the date of the first meeting. It will be sent out again, as there are only two responses so far.
- 25/113.7 **Issues with the website**
The issue is now fixed.
- 25/113.8 **Cross-discipline training days**
To be added to the ROC action log
- 25/113.9 **Vice-Chairman vacancy**
Ongoing
- 25/113.10 **KB to pick up with Chris Galer regarding the Articles of Association**
Ongoing
- 25/113.11 **Advertise for a Water Polo Manager**
An advert has been on the website and sent to the Leadership Group. There has been some interest, but no nominations. IM will speak to the Leadership Group members in September.
- 25/113.12 **The Audit Risk & Probity Committee (ARP) ToR needs to be reviewed regarding the ROC representative**
LT has started to review this.
- 25/113.13 **Identify venue for in-person Board meeting**
Dunton Village Hall has been booked for 9am-12 noon on Sunday 9th November.
- 25/113.14 **Legislation which requires all Directors to register and go through an identity verification process at Companies House**
LT advised that information is still coming out on this, and she will share more information soon.
- 25/113.15 **Appoint Director to the New ROC**
There were no volunteers. IM suggested that this is an agenda item for the November Board meeting.
- 25/114 Ratification of items agreed since 8th July**
- 25/114.1 There were no items for ratification.
- 25/115 Finance**
- 25/115.1 KB advised that the plan is roughly being followed. There is approximately £3k of income which is not showing from PayPal.

- 25/115.2 Income and expenditure are both down for Water Polo, as a result of the difficulties with the manager.
- 25/115.3 There is a shortfall from the Diving National Skills Final.
LT stated that this is probably due to not receiving the grant from Swim England and a few other items e.g. the photograph and branding.

25/116

Leadership Group minutes

- Masters
- 25/116.1 GM stated that the last meeting was not quorate. Doodle polls for a date for the next meeting have been sent, but there have not been many responses, Cambridgeshire do not have a representative on the meeting, and the Essex representative is now the Manager.
- SMu asked for persistence in rectifying this disappointing situation.
- 25/116.2 Entries for the Masters Championships are approximately 50% down on last year. This may be due to the event being moved to an earlier date this year.
- 25/116.3 TB asked if the event should be cancelled, as low numbers of entries mean that the swimmers have insufficient recovery time between swims.
KB stated that normally a large number of entries are received in the last week. He will compare this year's data with last year's to see if entries are on track, and will feedback.
TB felt that the Leadership Group need to be made aware that the Board have discussed the possibility of cancelling the event.

Action: KB to check last year's data

25/117

East Region Strategy

- 25/117.1 SMu reported that since the publication of the Strategy no feedback had been received.
- 25/117.2 SMA asked if SMu had presented the Strategy to Norfolk, as previously discussed. SMu confirmed that he had, but there had not been many questions during the meeting. SMu will present to other counties if this is wanted.
- 25/117.3 JSa presented the work in progress score card and action plan which is being developed to accompany the Strategy.
- 25/117.3.1 SMA asked if this would be shared with the Counties.
SMu responded it can be shared with the County Forum to show the progress, but it will mainly be shared with the Board.

25/118

Risk Register

- 25/118.1 There have been no updates to the Risk Register.

25/119

Regional Manager's report

25/119.1 Welfare Officer and Chair Conference

Three more participants have signed up, taking the total to 42.
Helen Weeks and James Diamond from Swim England, and Emma Swan from Active Suffolk will be the speakers on the day.

- 25/119.1.1 JSa proposed purchasing some customised lanyards and key fobs to be used as welfare promotion. The key fob would have a QR code on it to give information on key welfare and safeguarding contacts and resources.
The Board agreed to go ahead with the key fobs, but not the lanyards

25/119.2 Affiliation

During this quarter 21 clubs have successfully completed the affiliation process, with very few issues.

- 25/119.2.1 Work is continuing with clubs to ensure that their Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Safeguarding is up to date, and this is showing improvement in the statistics.
The DBS compliance is currently 99.6% compared with 91% last August.
The Safeguarding compliance is currently 98.8% compared with 96.7% last August.

25/119.3 Open Water Championships feedback

Overall the feedback received was positive. 80% of responses rated the experience of the day at 8 out of 10 or higher. There were also some comments regarding the day which the Leadership Group can consider for next year's Championships.

25/119.4 Regional / National Awards

The regional awards panel for the regional awards has met and decided on winners. Confirmation of the winners' eligibility has been received from Swim England.

- 25/119.4.1 A discussion took place regarding the timing of the notification of the winners and how the awards would be presented. It was agreed to notify the winners earlier than the proposed time of the end of the month.

- 25/119.4.2 A discussion took place concerning the awards panel process and the rationale behind some of the awards.

- 25/119.4.3 HS left the meeting.

- 25/119.5 A concern was raised about the appropriateness of a duty allocated to a volunteer at the Open Water Championships.

Action: JSa to check with HS

- 25/119.6 TB raised concerns about the feedback process following events. He believed that it is not just the discipline manager who needs to act on the feedback received, and that the feedback document was too long - it should be summarised before sharing.

SMu said that it is important to ask the opinion of members, and that the Leadership Group should be presented with all the data. Suggestions on changes to the questionnaire, or the content, or how it is presented would be appreciated, as would comments on whether the process itself is fit for purpose.

KB believed that the process is worth doing, but it would be good to draw key themes from the information received.

LT suggested that there could be a cover-sheet to highlight areas which need to be focused on. The questions and the process is something which could be discussed at the ROC.

25/120

25/120.1

Swim England organisation review

SMu reported that Swim England is currently looking at an organisational redesign. Staff have been notified of the process. The Swim England Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have been away in Wales to work on the redesign of the organisation. The intention is to notify the staff of the proposed reorganisation on 2nd September. There will then be a period of consultation. There has been a reassurance that, at this stage, there is no implication for the regional staff

25/121

25/121.1

In-person Board meeting

Dunton village hall has been booked for the in-person Board meeting on 9th November.

SMu asked for suggestions for agenda items other than the standard ones, as it was an opportunity for discussion and for a review of what is being done well and what could be improved.

KB suggested that, if the information is available, it would be good to look at the plans and budgets for each discipline for 2026.

TB suggested asking, via the ROC, what each discipline thinks needs to happen in the Region. This feedback can then be discussed.

25/122

25/122.1

Southend diving boards

LT reported that Freedom Leisure took over as the pool operator at Southend Swimming & Diving Centre on 1st July. There are a number of items which require replacing or fixing at the Centre, and this will take some time, but the new operators seem proactive. All the boards in the dry gym have been condemned, so one has been taken out of the pool for use in the dry gym..

LT will get a further update on the diving equipment at the next Leadership Group meeting on Thursday.

25/123

25/123.1

Website support contract

JSa explained that the annual fee is just for hosting the website, The only support included is if there is an issue with the hosting. Any other support is done as a goodwill gesture.

A monthly fee could be paid which would provide two hours of support per month and a 24hr. response time.

It was agreed to set up this arrangement, and for all requests to go through one person.

Action JSa and KB to contact David Hutson

25/124 Any other business

25/124.1 No other items were discussed.

25/125 Confidential Items

25/125.1 No confidential items were discussed.

25/126 Date for the next Board meeting

25/126.1 The date for the next Board meeting is 9th September 2025 at 7pm.