



Swim England East Region
Minutes of the Open Water Swimming Leadership Group meeting
7th October 2025, 7pm via Zoom

Present:	Paul Kendall (PK)	Manager
	Stewart Murray (SMu)	Director Representative
	Ian Murray (IM)	Bedfordshire Representative
	Helen Stephens (HS)	Essex Representative
	Jeremy Irvine (JI)	Hertfordshire Representative
	Jacqui Kendall (JK)	Norfolk Representative
	Stephen Westwood (SW)	Specialist
	Marion Westwood (MW)	Specialist

Also present: Emma Winter (EW), Regional Administrator, and Dave Harman (DH)

25/23 Welcome

25/23.1 PK welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending.

25/24 Apologies

25/24.1 No apologies were received.

25/24.2 JI left the meeting at 7.55pm.

25/24.3 DH left the meeting at 8.15pm

25/24.4 SMu joined the meeting at 8.55pm

25/25 Declarations of conflict of interest

25/25.1 No conflicts of interest were declared.

25/26 Previous minutes

25/26.1 Minutes from the meeting held on 8th May 2025 were circulated prior to the meeting and were approved.

25/27 Matters arising

25/27.1 Minute 25/17.2 - PK reported that the invoice has now come in for the water hire at Whitlingham. The cost was £3,600.00.

25/27.2 SW asked how much increase there was in the cost of water hire. PK did not have that information to hand, but the budget was £4,000 for this year's water hire and support, and it came in under budget.



- 25/27.3 PK reminded everyone of a discussion at the previous meeting about whether Para swimmers competing at regional events and qualifying for the Nationals should enter as Para swimmers or as able-bodied swimmers.

DH advised that, from an inclusive perspective, if a Para athlete entered the regional event they would be treated as a Para athlete. If they then qualified to swim at the Nationals, it would need to be made very clear that they would not be treated as a Para athlete at Nationals.

25/28 Open Water Championships 2025

- 25/28.1 PK specially thanked SW, Technical Director, and EW, results administrator on the day.

- 25/28.2 PK reported that a feedback survey went out after the event. This had been circulated prior to the meeting.

There was discussion on the feedback, and some key points were identified which will be looked at to improve on for future events.

- 25/28.3 PK reported that he will discuss with EW about improving the online, pre-event documentation for coaches.

Action: PK to draft improved online pre-event documentation for coaches.

Action: PK to consider creating a visual map of event locations which participants can download or reference online.

- 25/28.4 There was a discussion on the medal presentations and where the county and regional medals should be presented.

- 25/28.5 PK reported some feedback on the Masters swimmers' age-groups as the regional event does not align with the national Masters swimmers' age-groups.

It was agreed to align with the Masters swimmers' national age-groups - in groups of 5 years rather than 10. This will only be in place for the 2K, 3K and 5K events and not for the 1K, as this event is a development opportunity.

- 25/28.6 There was discussion on whether, for the 1K event, there should be a limitation so that swimmers can only compete in it once. The wording in the conditions will be looked at.



25/28.7 The time allowed for Para swimmers in all the events was discussed.

25/28.8 There was also discussion on Para swimmers entering the regional event and swimming fast enough to qualify for regionals.

25/28.9 The Team Manager/Coach/Chaperone policy was discussed.

25/28.10 Consideration will be given to providing overnight accommodation for those travelling long distances.

25/29 2025/2026 Plan and Budget

25/29.1 The financial report had been circulated prior to the meeting, and the proposed budget for 2026 was shared on screen.

25/29.2 PK went through the 2025 budget, highlighting that the predicted income for the entries was not achieved. The same value will be used for 2026.

25/29.3 Issues with coach passes were discussed. Some coaches had accessed the event without paying, despite showing credentials. It was agreed to implement stricter requirements for coach passes, ensuring that printed passes are presented for access to the decking.

PK raised a discrepancy between the number of coaches passes paid for, and the expected income. It should be over £1000.

25/29.4 PK reported that there was an expenditure in the committee costs which needs investigation.

Action: PK to ask the financial team about the discrepancy in the coach passes and the committee costs.

25/29.5 The Group discussed the budget for 2026 and various expenses including venue hire, chip timing, first aid cover, van hire, facilities hire and the purchase of new swimmer hats.

It was agreed to order 100 hats which will last for two years.

25/29.6 A discussion took place about the new temporary membership process.

Action: EW to investigate the new temporary membership process with Swim England.

25/29.7 It was agreed that the proposed budget will be submitted.



25/30 Open Water Development Day 2026

- 25/30.1 There was discussion on plans for the 2026 Open Water Development Day to include Masters swimmers.

EW presented a proposed schedule of three sessions for youth and Masters swimmers.

It was agreed to enquire if the first weekend in June 2026 would be available at Stanborough Lakes, and if it would be possible to extend the day so that Masters swimmers can be included.

Action: EW to inquire with Stanborough Lakes about availability for the first weekend in June and the possibility of extending the day.

Action: EW to circulate the proposed Development Day schedule to the Group.

25/31 Any other business

- 25/31.1 IM wondered if Swim England would consider a 12-13years age group for Open Water Nationals like they do for the pool but understood that it was not a question for the Region.
- 25/31.2 PK thanked everyone for joining the meeting and their ongoing support.

25/32 Confidential items

- 25/32.1 There were no confidential items.

25/33 Next meeting

- 25/33.1 The meeting dates were set for 2026.

24th February 2026
6th May 2026
18th August 2026
6th November 2026