



Swim England East Region
Minutes of the Water Polo Leadership Group Meeting
19th March 2025

Present	Dean Walker (DW)	Manager
	Ian Mackenzie (IM)	Director Representative
	Chris Cawood (CC)	Suffolk Coastal Torpedoes
	James Walker (JW)	Chelmsford SC
	Tim Whitwham (TW)	Bedford

Also present: James Salmon (JSa) Regional Manager

25/01 **Apologies**

25/01.1 DW opened the meeting. The meeting was declared inquorate.

25/01.2 Apologies received from Jonathan Lowy (JL) Hertford SC.

25/02 **Declarations of conflict of interest**

25/02.1 None declared.

25/03 **Previous minutes**

25/03.1 The previous minutes had been circulated prior to this meeting

25/03.2 The minutes were approved.

25/04 **Matters arising**

25/04.1 DW reported that the dates are set and have been circulated for the Regional Academy. Only two pools have responded - Riverside and Ice, Chelmsford and Haberdashers School, Elstree.

25/04.2 Royal Hospital School has availability, but there is a problem in getting numbers of players there. Bedford Modern School is a possibility for later in the year.

25/04.3 There was a discussion around the possibility of holding a Grand Prix for the under 13s at Bedford Modern School.

- 25/04.4 DW asked IM if school players could attend a Regional training session. IM confirmed that this was acceptable if the school agrees, and the players are insured by the school or the English School Swimming Association (ESSA).
- 25/04.5 DW reported the postponement of the next Assistant Coaches course which was due in April 2025. Only two people had registered..
- 25/04.6 DW reported that a level 2 Coaches course has been booked. Other courses are planned during the year - one before the summer holidays and one after.
- One course will be in the East Region, with the other covering the East /London Region. Dates being arranged.
- CC knew of two people who would like to attend.

25/05

2025 Plan and Budget

- 25/05.1 DW reported that the budget has been approved and is the same as last year, working towards the Inter-Regionals and holding 10 Regional Academy sessions. The cost for players to attend the Regional Academy sessions will stay at £10.
- DW emphasised that coaches who attend the Regional Academy session can claim for their mileage if they wish to.
- 25/05.2 DW reported that the dates are not yet set for the Inter-Regionals. As soon as dates are released, they will be circulated and work will start on getting teams together.
- DW confirmed that the Region covers the cost of the entry into the Inter-Regionals, but the cost of the coaches' hotels, travel and food is passed on to the players.
- IM stated that the dates for the Inter-Regionals have been confirmed and are in the calendar, but the venues have not been confirmed.
- Action: DW to find out if the dates have been confirmed and put them on the calendar.
- 25/05.3 DW reported that all the disciplines within the Region are getting branding to have on poolside when holding events.
- 25/05.4 JSa provided information on the different type of branding available. There was discussion.
- 25/05.5 It was agreed to have two 'Toblerones' and two pull-up banners in red, with the County names.
- 25/05.6 DW reported that he is waiting for clubs to respond regarding holding a Grand Prix.



- 25/05.7 A discussion took place about the possibility of entering a combined East Region under 15 team into the National Conference League – maybe next year.
- 25/05.8 DW reported that regional kit comprises of four sets of old regional hats for use at the training sessions. However, attending coaches or the venue are relied on to provide the balls and any other equipment that is needed.
- 25/05.9 DW said that it would be good for the kit to be looked after by the Leadership Group. The regional hats are currently stored at Chelmsford and DW is happy for this to continue.

25/06 Updates from representatives

- 25/06.1 JW reported more juniors coming through at Chelmsford. Friendlies are held - Suffolk Coastal come along. Could this be developed further to involve all clubs in the Region?
Discussion took place around holding a Grand Prix/friendly fixtures and who to invite and the best way to run the matches.
- 25/06.2 DW reported that the Hertfordshire and District League has clubs from Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire taking part, and Spalding and teams in East Region play in the Eastern League.

Action: DW to contact pools regarding full day hire and costs.
Action: JW to speak to the Eastern League regarding holding a junior league.
- 25/06.3 TW had nothing to report from Bedford.
- 25/06.4 IM advised that there is a national Water Polo Leadership Group meeting on 9th April 2025 at 6.30pm.
- 25/06.5 IM reported that the Region's Annual General Meeting (AGM) is being held on Wednesday 23rd April at 7pm.

25/07 Any other business

- 25/07.1 DW reported that the Regional Academy sessions are held monthly, with the exception of August and December. Historically, until the last 18 months, they have been reasonably well attended and the cost has been covered over the years. Recently the sessions have struggled with the numbers of players, coaches and team managers attending.
- 25/07.1.1 DW asked the Group for ideas going forward for the Regional Academy sessions.

- 25/07.1.2 CC commented that changing from weekly to monthly sessions had not been ideal. It was difficult to provide reinforcement.

Spreading the monthly sessions round the Region had also proved difficult, as the Region covers a large area. The distances to travel and the cost of that travel were issues for many.

- 25/07.1.3 There was a suggestion that the Region was split in two, and every three months all the players were brought together. A host club's training time would be used, and £10 would be charged when the Region needed to hire a pool.

A discussion took place around how it would work and having committed coaches for the sessions.

- 25/07.1.4 DW stated that using a club's training time would need to be done properly, ensuring too that the club, especially a multidiscipline club was happy with players from other clubs attending for a training session not a training game.

- 25/07.1.5 DW reported that the next Regional Academy session is being held on the 19th April which is Easter Saturday at Chelmsford. It is too late to cancel, so to increase numbers consideration was given to various options – open it to all players, or have a game-play scenario, or invite players from other Regions.

It was agreed to open the session to all players born 2008 to 2013.

- 25/07.2 It was suggested that a come-and-try session should be held in Peterborough and promote it to all local swimming clubs in the Cambridgeshire area.

Action: Emma Winter (EW) to look into venues in the Peterborough area where they will allow water polo.

- 25/07.3 DW suggested changing one or two of the Chelmsford bookings from Regional Academy sessions to holding a Grand Prix.

Action: DW to look at reducing pool time that is booked for after September.

- 25/07.4 DW reported that there needs to be more Team Manager 1 to help support sessions. The Team Manager workshops are on the Region's website and DW asked that players' parents are encouraged to become members of clubs and complete the Team Manager 1 workshop.

- 25/07.5 There was a screen-share of the Inter-Regionals team selection policy.

DW explained how the policy has come about and informed the Group that it will be circulated after the meeting for any feedback.

The policy covers how selections are made with regards to players attending the Regional Academy sessions and being selected for an Inter-Regional team.



25/07.6 DW reported that a policy is being considered for coaches and team managers stating certain criteria commitment from the Region and their attendance at sessions.

25/08 Confidential items

25/08.1 No confidential items.

25/09 Next meeting

25/09.1 DW asked for suggested days and times for the next meeting.

25/09.2 DW asked EW to ask clubs for their training days and times when the minutes are circulated.

25/09.3 All present confirmed that they can attend future meetings on a Wednesday.

25/09.4 The next meeting will be on 25th June 2025 at 6.30pm

Action: EW to ask clubs for their training days/times and to send DW the Water Polo Leadership Group distribution list to check that it is up to date.