



**Swim England East Region
Minutes of the Board of Directors**

9th November 2025 at 09:30, in Dunton Village Hall

Present:	Stewart Murray (SMu)	Regional Chairman
	Keith Belton (KB)	Finance 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

25/158 **Apologies and introductions**

25/158.1 Apologies were received from Tom Baster.

25/159 **Declarations of conflict of interest**

25/159.1 No declarations of conflict of interest were made.

25/160 **Minutes**

25/160.1 The minutes of the previous Board meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

25/161 **Matters arising – using the Action Log**

25/161.1 **Stock insurance**

Ongoing – KB has gathered all the required information. The next step is to determine what needs to be insured.

25/161.2 **County Governance**

Four counties have completed their submissions. Essex has a small number of items to review. Cambridgeshire is still progressing its submission, and Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire are commencing Phase 2.

25/161.3 **Vice-Chairman vacancy**

The role has been advertised and will be discussed under the relevant agenda item.



25/161.4 Changes to the Articles of Association

KB advised that a request has been submitted to the Charity Commission to make the change. This process can take up to 16 weeks.

25/161.5 Review of the Audit, Risk & Probity Committee (ARP) Terms of Reference

LT Has completed the document, which has been submitted to Helen Kent-Jackson, Chairman of the ARP, for review. No response has been received to date.

25/161.6 Director appointment to the new Regional Operations Committee (ROC)

To be discussed under the relevant agenda item

25/161.7 All Directors to complete their identity checks and send to KB

This has been completed by all Directors except one.

25/161.8 New regional awards process

To be discussed under the relevant agenda item

25/162 Ratification of items agreed since 14th October

25/162.1 There were no items requiring ratification.

25/163 Finance

25/163.1 KB identified a few issues with the figures, but a full reconciliation of PayPal appears to have resolved them.

25/163.2 KB highlighted concerns that the Managers and Leadership Groups may not be reviewing the figures in detail, as certain discrepancies, such as non-whole pound entry fee totals and branding costs, do not appear to be challenged.

25/163.3 LT suggested that it may be a couple of months or more before these figures are reviewed in a meeting because of scheduling constraints. She also recommended that the budgets be sent to the Leadership Groups along with the meeting agenda.
KB added that the Groups should be less concerned with the precise numbers and instead use them to identify areas where they are not following their plan.

25/163.4 IM asked why the Club Leadership Group outgoings have increased substantially.
KB explained that this is due to the cost of the Welfare Conference. The Club Leadership Group budget also covers the costs of hosting the Time to Listen and Team Manager courses.

25/164 Leadership Group minutes

25/164.1 Diving Leadership Group

The minutes of the Diving Leadership Group were discussed.
LT stated that all the clubs in the Region are performing well.



- 25/164.2 Cambridge Diving has recruited a new apprentice.
- A discussion took place regarding the apprenticeship process and its advantages. It was proposed that further information be gathered to share with other clubs in the Region, as this may be beneficial. Cambridge Diving could serve as a case study for other clubs.
- Action: JSa to contact Cambridge Diving and Sharyn Bord for more information**

- 25/164.3 **Open Water Leadership Group**
- SMu reported that the last meeting was lengthy but very productive.
- Feedback following the championships was discussed in detail and found to be useful, with minor changes suggested for next year.

- 25/164.4 SMa noted that the minutes shared with the Board did not reflect the corrections she had made.
- SMu responded that the key focus should be on the content of the documents rather than grammatical accuracy.
- LT queried whether it would be possible to use AI to generate minutes from the recording.
- Action: JSa to investigate the feasibility of generating minutes using AI**

25/165 Risk Register

- 25/165.1 The Risk Register has been updated to include a potential risk regarding information-sharing with Swim England and the Region on safeguarding issues (Item 5.6).
- 25/165.2 No other changes were made.

25/166 Regional Manager's report

- 25/166.1 **Para Championships feedback**
- Feedback from the recent Para Championships has been compiled and reviewed. Overall, the response was very positive, with several strengths highlighted. A few areas for potential improvement were also identified and will be considered by the Leadership Group.
- 25/166.2 **Swim England Reorganisation**
- The consultation period has now concluded, and the final structure has been released. The organisation has entered a phase of individual consultation to appoint staff to the newly defined roles.
- A discussion took place regarding potential implications for the Region if key individuals at Swim England were to leave the organisation.
- 25/166.3 **Club Affiliation**
- Twenty-one clubs are progressing through the process this quarter. Two clubs were granted a one-week extension on a couple of items, which have now been completed.



25/166.4 **Event branding**

The new branding has been received and implemented across all disciplines, except for Water Polo. Feedback has been highly positive, with multiple comments noting the enhancement to the overall presentation of events.

At this point in the meeting a two-minute silence was observed
for Remembrance Day.

25/167 Vice-Chairman

25/167.1 One nomination had been received from Gerry Metcalf. GM confirmed that she was willing to fulfil the Vice-Chairman role but did not wish this to form part of a succession plan for the Regional Chairman position.

The appointment was unanimously approved.

25/168 Swim England East Region fees

25/168.1 KB reported that there will be no increase in membership fees for 2026, and these are now fixed. Consideration should however be given to a potential increase in 2027.

SMu asked, with additional expenditure being considered for next year and requests made to the Leadership Groups to assess future needs, whether there would there be a requirement for a significant increase in 2027.

25/168.2 Officials' licence fees were not discussed. This matter will be considered at the Board meeting in December during the budget approval process.

25/169 Regional Awards process

25/169.1 A discussion took place regarding the current Awards Panel and how the process could be improved to ensure that awards are made fairly and consistently.

It was agreed that the panel should comprise of the current President and the immediate Past President, as well as members of the ROC. This would provide Director representation and ensure that each discipline is represented. As the panel usually meets during the summer holiday period, any member unable to attend should nominate a suitable substitute.

25/169.2 The list of nominations will be reviewed by the Regional Welfare Officer before being sent to the panel, to ensure that any potential award recipient is not subject to safeguarding investigations or concerns.

25/169.3 A list of winners from the past five years will be provided to the panel for consideration, to ensure that it is appropriate to award the same individual or club again.

Action: JSa to update the Awards Panel Terms of Reference and circulate it to the Board for approval at the next Board meeting



25/170 **Delegated limits of authority**

25/170.1 KB noted that the Finance Policy covering this area has not undergone a full review since 2009. It requires updating to allow Managers to sign off invoices and for staff to make necessary purchases without requiring Board approval.

Action: KB to review the Finance Policy and has requested feedback from the Board within the next two weeks.

25/171 **Succession planning**

25/171.1 SMu noted that Item 3.3 on the Risk Register concerns recruiting new Directors and Leadership Group Managers, emphasising that the Region should have adequate succession planning. The Board needs to address this proactively. There is no upper limit on the number of Directors or Board members.

SMu highlighted that some people will perceive that they are unsuitable to fulfil these roles, and this perception needs to be changed.

LT suggested inviting individuals to join the Board and shadow a Director to better understand the role. Additionally, a feature in the newsletter, "Meet a Board Member," could be used to raise awareness.

SMu expressed the intention to recruit at least two new Board members.

Action: Prepare an advertisement for new Board members to be reviewed at the next Board meeting

25/171.2 All Leadership Group Managers and Officers are due for reappointment in April 2026 and need to be contacted to confirm whether they wish to continue in their roles.

Action: JSa to contact all Leadership Group Managers and Officers

25/172 **Director on the ROC**

25/172.1 SMu proposed that the role would be well suited to a newly recruited Board member, offering a valuable opportunity to develop an understanding of the various disciplines and meet the Leadership Group Managers.

25/173 **Event feedback process**

25/173.1 This is a fairly new process, and is still being developed. It has been suggested that a clear policy for this should be created, being mindful about asking anyone under 18 to participate.

25/173.2 The latest feedback document for the Para-Swimming Championships included an executive summary. A discussion took place regarding this document.

It was decided that the Board would only receive the executive summary, while the Leadership Group would review the full document. The Board member on the Leadership Group would report back to the Board on any items of concern.



25/174

Any other business

- 25/174.1 IM has been in contact with Ally Whike concerning the condemned diving boards at Southend Leisure Centre and the conflict of interest that the only supplier in Europe for these boards is also responsible for inspecting and condemning them.

After discussions with Ally, the supplier has agreed to provide the boards at cost price with no additional charge for fitting. The total cost to replace the three boards is £21,000. Ally has asked if the Region can contribute towards this cost. The Region recently contributed to replacing some fulcrums, supposedly as part of a three-way split, however the Council has not yet paid their share.

LT noted that the new pool operator, Freedom Leisure, appears reluctant to spend money on the diving boards as there are several other issues at the Centre which they consider as having higher priority.

Action: IM to set up a meeting between Freedom Leisure, the Council, and the club. LT to also attend

- 25/174.2 SMu has been sent a questionnaire concerning the Governance Review. He has already shared this with Chris Galer for his input and would also like to receive feedback from the rest of the Board.

Action: SMu to share the list of questions with the Board for their comments

- 25/174.3 GM informed the Board that she has been appointed to the new Swim England Officials' Group. The Region is very well represented, as, of nine members in total, five are from the Region. Other members from the Region are Tom Baster, Jane Howell, Paul Kendall and David Metcalf.

- 25/174.4 SMA provided feedback that she thought this meeting had been very productive and suggested holding one or two in-person Board meetings per year.

25/175

Confidential items

- 25/175.1 No confidential items were discussed.

25/176

Date for the next Board meeting

- 25/176.1 The next Board meeting will be held on 9th December 2025 at 19:00 via Zoom.