

**Swim England East Region**  
**Minutes of the Open Water Swimming Leadership Group Meeting**  
**6<sup>th</sup> February 2024 via Zoom**

<b>Present</b>	Paul Kendall (PK)	Manager
	Stewart Murray (SMu)	Regional Operations Committee (ROC) Representative
	Andrew Cleland (AC)	Cambridgeshire Representative
	Ian Murray (IM)	Bedfordshire Representative
	Jacqui Kendall (JK)	Norfolk Representative
	Sara Mathews (SM)	Hertfordshire Representative
	Helen Stephens (HS)	Essex Representative
	Stephen Westwood (SW)	Specialist
	Marion Westwood (MW)	Specialist

Also present Emma Winter, Regional Administrator (EW)

**24/01**                      **Apologies**

- 24/01.1      PK welcomed the Group to the meeting.
- 24/01.2      No apologies received from Suffolk.
- 24/01.3      AC attended the meeting at 8:20pm and apologised for being late.

**24/02**                      **Declarations of conflict of interest**

- 24/02.1      There were none.

**24/03**                      **Previous minutes**

- 24/03.1      Minutes from the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 were circulated prior to the meeting.
- 24/03.2      SW picked up two spelling mistakes. 23//37.2 spelling mistake (gathered support). 23/37.4 spelling mistake (quite).

- 24/03.3 HS asked about 23/37.2. It states there were still areas that could have more support, PK clarified that it meant that HS would benefit more from further afield than her area, meaning from different Counties and clubs.
- 24/03.4 JK confirmed that the Open Water event will no longer clash with Norwich Swan's big gala which hopefully would mean there would be more volunteers from there.
- 24/03.5 SMu pointed out to EW that there are now two SM within the Group and suggested that she make him SMu on future minutes.
- 24/03.6 SMu 23/39.7 – co-inside, spelling mistake.
- 24/03.7 Minutes corrected and were agreed.

#### **24/04**

#### **Matters arising**

- 24/04.1 HS asked if there would be the chance for Race Timing solutions to have two people at the event.
- 24/04.2 PK will ask if this would be viable or not.

#### **24/05**

#### **Open Water Championships 2024 - Conditions**

- 24/05.1 PK pointed out that the Open Water Championships are not just Regional Championships but also for the Counties to incorporate their County Championships within the same event. PK asked the County Representatives on the meeting if their County is looking to incorporate their Championships again this year within the Regional Championships.
- 24/05.2 PK confirm Norfolk will be, HS confirmed that Essex will be, IM confirmed Bedfordshire will be and SM confirmed Hertfordshire will be, which just leaves Cambridgeshire and Suffolk to confirm.
- 24/05.3 SM asked what the fee would be for the Counties to use the Championships. PK confirmed that there is a fee and that it will remain the same at £250.
- 24/05.4 SM also asked about the fee that Whittlingham is going to charge this year. PK confirmed that we have been informed of the fee and that has been put into the budget for this year, but waiting for them to raise the invoice to pay the deposit.
- 24/05.5 SM suggested that if there has been an increase in the cost of the hire that maybe look at increasing the County fee but as it had been put into the budget already it is not possible for this year and something to look at next year.
- PK informed the Group that the cost of the hire has been reflected in the entry fee for this year and that it has been increased. PK also suggested that for future events we will need to look at raising the amount that Counties pay to use the event for their County Championships.
- JK suggested that the County Representatives go back to their County to see if they would still be prepared to use the event for their County Championships if the fee was to go up.
- 24/05.6 PK went through the conditions with some changes that needed making.



- Temporary membership – not to include in the conditions, PK suggested that if anyone comes forward who is not a Swim England member, they will need to contact PK.
- To include the Trans gender policy in the conditions.
- SMu asked does the Coach, Team Manager and Chaperone policy come into effect at an Open Water event, a discussion took place regarding this and EW to double check and find out.
- SW brought up the new policy about the use of mobile phones in changing areas. SMu suggested putting a paragraph in that mobile phones should not be used in the changing pods.
- Price of Coach passes to be put back to £15.
- IM asked if the personal declaration, would include the medical declaration, EW confirmed that she will get it included with the entry form this year.

PK informed the Group that he had received an email regarding a change to the National distances and a change to the selection criteria from each Region for Swimmers to qualify for the National Open Water event.

PK had not had confirmation of what the distances will be but has a suspicion that they will be increased.

A discussion took place at the meeting regarding the changes to the National distances. As a collective, the Group do not feel that it would be fair on the swimmers to be expected to swim a GREATER distance at the Nationals if they have not swam it at their Regional event.

- Point 9 of the conditions needs to include a point regarding Para-Swimmers who need assistance.
- Closing date to be the 16<sup>th</sup> June. IM asked how late the closing date can go. PK confirmed no later than 4 weeks before the event.
- Refunds to include withdrawal on medical grounds
- SM suggested to put a temperature update on the Regions website four weeks and two weeks before the event.
- Include jewellery is not to be worn and finger and toe nails must be trimmed.
- SM suggested putting a bit in about only two hats are permitted but the numbered hat to be worn on the outside.
- SM suggested moving point 25 to incorporate with point 9.4.

24/05.7

Para-Swimming conditions

PK informed the Group that Peter Winter has put together a set of Para-Swimming conditions for a Para-Swimming event within the Championships.

24/05.8 SM mentioned that with the 1Km S3 to S6, we would need to make sure that we have adequate support for the S3 swimmers.

PK said that he would like the support from Dave Harman on this as he has supported other Open Water events for Para-Swimmers. PK confirmed that he will need to do a bit more research.

SM agreed that it is a really good thing to include but do need more information.

There was a discussion around the conditions and classifications and what events the swimmers can take part in. There was also a discussion regarding on how the medals would be awarded.

SM suggested that if PK cannot get hold of Dave Harman to contact David Metcalf for advice.

24/05.9 PK asked the Group that if the Para-Swimming conditions are accepted widely by the Para-Swimming community, would they be happy for Para-Swimming event be included this year. The Group were in agreement for it to go ahead.

## **24/06 Open Water Championships - Update**

### **24/06.1 Accommodation**

Last year for the Championships we had Officials who we provided accommodation for. PK informed the Group that he had some feedback that those who were eligible for accommodation weren't being dealt with in the same way as if they were at a pool event.

After PK looked into it further, the Region provided a hotel room for their main Officials, provided that they were giving up their time over two days, rather than one day.

In previous years for the Open Water event we offered expenses towards the cost of a hotel room, and they claimed for this, but for the volunteers who came and helped set up and officiated on the day, we provided a hotel room.

SM suggested that this should be kept the same - so for the main people who come and help set out and help on the day to provide a hotel room and anyone else to claim back through expenses up to the value that is stated in the policy.

PK to contact Jo Stalley (JS) to arrange booking hotel rooms for the people who do help to set up and on the day of the event.

### **24/06.2 Water Safety**

Last year we had a lack of water safety sign up for the event, which lead to hiring a commercial company to help provide water safety. Learning from that, last year after the event PK pushed out a request to the volunteer canoeist and since then had 13/14 confirmed so this year we should have enough water safety cover for our event.



- 24/06.3      Facilities for the event  
PK informed the Group that the venue is booked, portable toilets have been booked and deposit paid.
- The PA system has been booked. Race timing solutions have been made aware and booked.
- Fine designs are aware and will make a design to go onto the hoodies and T-Shirts.
- Medical cover is all booked and agreed. PK informed the Group that he has been in discussion with the medical team to enquire if we needed an air ambulance to land. They confirmed that there are fields nearby which would accommodate an air ambulance and the only thing we would need to look at is how to get the ambulance staff to the venue.
- SW will make the normal traffic management applications.
- 24/06.4      National Qualifiers – When informing them that they have qualified an emphasise that they need to be prompt in making their decision and submitting their application form and making payment at the same time as entering.
- 24/06.5      Proposed entry opening if everything is in place 1<sup>st</sup> March. AC left the meeting at 21.36pm
- 24/07                      Open Water Development Day 2024**
- 24/07.1      Online Officials training development days – proposed dates  
17<sup>th</sup> March  
27<sup>th</sup> April  
18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> May
- 24/07.2      Open Water Development day 2024  
Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June at Stanborough Lakes, it will be opened up on a first come first served basis. EW will inform the Group when entries open.
- PK asked SW if Josh Devine (JD) had spoken with London regarding maybe joining up with the Development day. SW confirmed that London will be holding their own Development day this year.

24/07.3	PK raised that at Stanborough there is limited space for classroom work with the capacity to be up to 40. JK suggested that if there is space they could use a gazebo for extra swimmers to attend. EW to contact Stanborough to see if that would be possible.
	SMu asked if we could deliver the classroom based work online prior to the day which would open it up to a larger number. EW to look into it with the lead coach.
<b>24/08</b>	<b>Plan and Budget 2024</b>
24/08.1	PK confirmed that the budget and plan for 2024 has been approved by the Board and no changes need making unless we find we need to include anything further down the line.
24/08.2	The budget has been agreed so there is an element in the budget to purchase 1000 hats which should cover the next two, possible three, years. JK has been in contact with the company who supply them and had an email confirmation for latex hats non-printed in any colour at £1 plus VAT per hat with free delivery.
24/08.3	Officials' T-Shirts: JK has been in contact with the company that supply the Region with their officials' tops. They have sent a size chart and colour samples - a light blue or red. The officials will be asked for their size when signing up to the event.
<b>24/09</b>	<b>Any other business</b>
24/09.1	PK confirmed that Norfolk will be holding some sort of Open Water development day.
24/09.2	IM informed the Group that Bedfordshire may look into holding something for Open Water. HS hasn't heard if Essex is planning anything.
<b>24/10</b>	<b>Confidential items</b>
24/10.1	There were none.
<b>24/11</b>	<b>Next meeting</b>
24/11.1	The next meeting to be held on Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> May at 7pm via Zoom.
24/11.2	After the meeting EW realised that the next meeting clashes with two other meetings so that the Zoom accounts would be unavailable. EW contacted PK and SMu with two other dates the 7 <sup>th</sup> May or the 21 <sup>st</sup> May. Both happy with either date.