



Swim England East Region
Minutes of the Open Water Swimming Leadership Group Meeting
21st May 2024 via Zoom

Present	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
	Sarah Tait (ST)	Suffolk Representative
	Stephen Westwood (SW)	Specialist
	Marion Westwood (MW)	Specialist

Also present James Salmon, Regional Manager (JS)

24/12 **Apologies**

- 24/12.1 PK welcomed the Group to the meeting.
- 24/12.2 No apologies received.
- 24/12.3 AC attended the meeting at 8:20pm and apologised for being late.

24/13 **Declarations of conflict of interest**

- 24/13.1 There were none.

24/14 **Previous minutes**

- 24/14.1 Minutes from the meeting held on 6th February 2023 were circulated prior to the meeting.
- 24/14.2 Minutes corrected and were agreed.

24/15 **Matters arising**

- 24/15.1 No matters arising
- 24/16 Open Water Championships 2024 - Update**
- 24/16.1 PK Welcomes James Salmon to the meeting as the new Regional Manager
- 24/16.2 PK Confirmed that the infrastructure/facilities for the day are all booked and deposits paid.
- 24/16.3 PK has created a time line for the participant's for the day, this should be on the website, this could be sent out when requesting further volunteers, IM confirmed that this was on the Website. HS asked if the timings were the same as last year. PK confirmed that they were. Gates will open 07:15/07:30. The briefing will be at 07:45.
- 24/16.4 JK Catering staff are in place and have sourced an vegetarian option at a very good price. This year we will have an vegetarian option for the public that we do not normally offer
- 24/16.5 PK has not yet received the updated Emergency Action Plan and Normal Action Plan from Whitlingham, however they have confirmed that there is a plan in place should there be a need for an Air Ambulance to access the Country Park. We plan to have a vehicle at the carpark end for transport should this be needed. The normal ambulance access route, road condition is very poor. SW Suggested that an alternative route could be down the path, past the spectators. PK responded that this may be possible, but this is not what is in the agreed action plan. JK will request that the hedges are trimmed to make the path wider should there be a need to get a vehicle through this route
- 24/16.6 PK confirmed that the PA for the event has been booked. Fine Designs will be there for the clothing merchandise, but as yet no designs for this have been seen. JK Confirmed that the Chip Timing company have requested the numbers required, but this is not finalised yet due to entries till being open
- SW Will liaise with NCC and The Highways agency concerning permission for the required road signage
- 24/16.7 PK Confirmed that they have 1000 hats of various colours, this stock we anticipate should last for up to 3 years.
- 24/16.8 IM asked if there would be tables provided for the Counties to use for Medals and trophies etc. PK requested that Counties bring their own as Whitlingham cannot provide enough and that all presentation of medals to be made at the podium, as the Deck gets very busy.

- 24/16.9 SW Stated that Whitlingham is a busy Country Park any necessary vehicle movements must be kept to a minimum, hazard warning lights should be used at all time and any reversing, requires a banksman. At no more than 5mph. On the day of the event only vehicles will only be allowed in an emergency.
- 24/16.10 PK States and wants it to be added to the website
“The carpark is managed by a separate carpark management company; the event organisers do not have any control over this. If any vehicle is not parked in accordance with the regulations of the car park, a penalty notice will be issued. This includes not parking within the marked lines or non-payment of the appropriate fee.
The organisers do not accept any responsibility for car parking”
- 24/16.11 JK Stated that any participant’s or spectators requiring a disabled parking space needs to request this before the event as there are no designated disabled spaces in the car park we use, a note should be added to the website to reflect this.
- 24/16.12 PK informed the group that currently there are no para swimmers signed up but, there will be one swimmer with a S14 classification who will be swimming in the 5k race rather than the 3k para event, as if he swam this he would then not be able to qualify for Nationals. SMu asked if he would be swimming as a S14 swimmer. PK confirmed he is not swimming as a S14 classification.
- 24/16.13 PK confirmed that the top 5 swimmers from each gender and age would qualify for Nationals, (this does not include the 12 year old competitors) Each region has a different number of qualifiers, this is based on the number of SE members in each Region.
- 24/16.14 JS informed the group that there would be no support from the regional staff on the day due to the availability of the Staff

24/17

Online Entries

- 24/17.1 PK confirmed that currently there are 132 entries and no para or SOGB entries but there is still 3 weeks until entries close. Could all of the County representatives ensure a reminder is sent to all of their County clubs
- 24/17.2 SMu asked how this compares to previous years. PK not sure of the figures for the same time in previous years. But he is disappointed that the event was late opening for entries for various reasons. He had hoped to open entries on March 1st, but this did not happen until 18th April.

24/18

Online Volunteers Sign up

- 24/18.1 PK Confirmed that there are currently 39 officials that have volunteered, both qualified and trainees, so there will be a number of mentoring sessions
- 24/18.2 PK had been notified by Whitlingham of their new qualification requirements for the canoeist due to their accreditation, but this should not be an issue. Currently there are 13/14 canoeist that have volunteered
- 24/18.3 JK asked if there had been any other volunteers sign up online. HS asked if all the roles were the same as last year, if so, she would set this up so people can volunteer. PK informed the group that all volunteers for the event had to be SE members, for insurance purposes, this included the carpark marshals, food vendors etc. This was being done through City of Norwich SC
- 24/18.4 PK stated that any official that would be there for 2 days would be provided with accommodation. Mileage will be paid for any volunteers
- 24/18.5 HS Asked about car parking for volunteers. JK stated that they will be sent a parking permit to use on the day, but it is still to be decided where the volunteers will be parked
- 24/19 Open Water Development Day 2024 8th June**
- 24/19.1 PK confirmed that there are currently 45 swimmers already signed up for the day. 3 qualified coaches with another 4 coaches that will be observing for their own development. 3 team managers are also signed up. This will also be an opportunity to develop new Officials.
- 24/19.2 PK informed the group that there are more swimmers signed up than the classroom can accommodate, so to manage this they will be split in to two groups, one group in the water with the other group on land. At the end of the day they will all compete in a short race to put in to practice the skills they have learned.
- 24/20 2024 Plan and Budget**
- 24/20.1 PK Stated that the budget is following the plan. He is not aware of any issues.
- 24/20.2 PK is aware that Whitlingham will increase their prices by about 25% next year. The amount that the Counties pay to use the Regional event for their Counties may need to increase, currently this is £250, PK suggests this is increased to £400. SMu replied that the amount charged should be what is felt fair and what covers the costs. IM feedback that the Counties could take the results from the Regional event and use these to produce their own results and not pay anything for them. SM suggests that there should only be a small increase, this could be of £50 per year, until you get to your target figure. ST agrees that the £50 would fit better with the 25% increase.
- 24/20.3 PK proposes that the fee is put up to £300, Please could the County representative ask for agreement for each County
- 24/21 Any other business**

- 24/21.1 AC joined the meeting and apologised for being late
- 24/21.2 SW Would like to congratulate Stewart Murray on passing the first part of his Referee qualification
- 24/21.3 PK Stated in the last 3 months he has trained 22 new officials on the Open Water theory course, and hopes to see them soon to continue with the practical element
- 24/21.4 PK has requested that anyone that may be available to help with the results to contact him. SW has suggested a possible volunteer, HS will make this request to him.

24/22 Confidential items

- 24/22.1 There were none.

24/23 Next meeting

- 24/23.1 The next meeting to be held on Tuesday 1st October at 7pm via Zoom.