

**Swim England East Region
Minutes of the County Forum Meeting
Tuesday 24th March 2026 at 7pm, via Zoom**

In attendance:

Kevin Rumsey (KR)	Norfolk Chairman/Chairman of the meeting
Stewart Murray (SMu)	Regional Chairman
Phil Pelling (PP)	Bedfordshire Secretary
Gergely Kokas (GK)	Cambridgeshire Chairman
Nicola Phillips (NP)	Cambridgeshire Secretary
Angela Eguakhide (AE)	Essex Secretary
Bryan Thompson (BT)	Hertfordshire Chairman
Sheila Mackenzie (SM)	Hertfordshire Secretary
Ian Cotton (IC)	Suffolk Chairman
Chris Vinter (CV)	Suffolk Secretary

Also in attendance:

James Salmon (JSa)	Regional Manager
--------------------	------------------

26/01

Apologies, welcome and introductions

- 26/01.1 KR welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 26/01.2 Attendees confirmed that they had received the Swim England Governance Review report.

26/02

Declarations of conflict of interest

- 26/02.1 None declared.

26/03

Previous minutes

- 26/03.1 The minutes of the meeting on 25th November 2025 had been circulated. No points were raised, and the minutes were agreed.

26/04

Matters arising

- 26/04.1 No matters arising.

26/05

Regional updates

- 26/05.1 SMu delivered a comprehensive update on the Swim England Governance Review, summarising consultation feedback, structural proposals, and implications for counties.

SMu explained that volunteers reported high administrative burdens, inconsistencies in guidance, and communication gaps.

Swim England proposes improved national consistency in constitutions, HR processes, IT systems and welfare frameworks.

SMu outlined the two 'extreme' models: -

- 1) To remain as connected but independent entities
- 2) To have fully integrated Swim England governance

SMu emphasised that the proposals are for consultation, not decisions.

SMu stated that the Regional Board's concern centred on unrealistic timescales and insufficient prior notice for meaningful feedback.

26/05.2 SMu explained about the new "combined regional squads". One of the regional squads would support both London Region and East Region, with roles for club support, learn-to-swim, welfare and business engagement.

BT asked how the regional combinations were chosen.

SMu explained that the groupings were based on membership and workload balancing, not geography.

AE asked if the report confidential.

SMu clarified that the regional version was marked confidential, but the counties' version was not. JSa will confirm the final status.

26/05.3 SMu encouraged counties to share the report only with County Management Boards/Executives until formal clarification is issued.

26/06

County updates

26/06.1 Cambridgeshire - NP reported significant progress in filling volunteer roles. The following roles have been filled - Treasurer, Masters Representative, Disability Representative, President-Elect, Championships Officer, and IT/Media Lead. The role of Welfare Officer is still vacant but under discussion.

Cambridgeshire County Swimming Championships saw a 35% increase in swimmers following new conditional qualifying times. Development camps are progressing well, including aquatics-diversity sessions and upcoming para-swimmer expansion.

26/06.2 Norfolk – KR reported a very high attendance at the Swimming Championships. Live-streaming was successfully introduced, with an extremely positive community response.

The development gala and challenge/master events are scheduled.

- 26/06.3 Essex – AE reported that the updated constitution has been adopted. Many long-serving officers have stepped down, creating volunteer recruitment needs across disciplines.
- Successful Swimming Championships were held at the London Aquatics Centre (LAC), with consideration times being introduced. Long-course training at the LAC remains popular.
- 26/06.4 Bedfordshire – PP reported that the County Swimming Championships had run well, but the use of backstroke ledges caused session timing issues requiring future scheduling review.
- A new combined club is being formed because of a pool closure.
- A Disability Secretary candidate has been identified.
- 26/06.5 Suffolk - IC/CV reported record Swimming Championships numbers. The development meet has been moved to an earlier date, with a positive response. The county is reviewing a large volume of feedback, and plan to refine qualifying times.
- Governance submissions are complete pending national sign-off.
- 26/06.6 Hertfordshire - BT/SM reported that the County Swimming Championships were extremely busy. It was livestreamed as in previous years. The scheduling of the relay events created long days, so the relay events will be moved next year.
- Development camps are continuing.
- A new member has joined Management Board, though three vacancies remain.
- 26/07 Club Affiliation and SwimMark update**
- 26/07.1 JSa reported that 25 clubs are currently progressing through affiliation. Persistent issues include incorrect Annual General Meeting (AGM) documentation, misunderstanding constitutional requirements, and safeguarding refresher courses taken without completing the full course first.
- 26/07.2 JSa reported that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) delays remain problematic. Clubs must ensure compliance independently as Swim England no longer provides central safeguarding data.
- 26/07.3 JSa reported that a new national membership system will be launching in Autumn 2026. This will unify safeguarding, affiliation and personnel data entry, reducing the administrative burden.
- 26/07.4 AE asked if there is a standard AGM agenda template
- JSa stated that there isn't a template. The AGM content must directly follow each club's constitution.
- SM emphasised that constitutions must be reviewed, agreed, and the agreement minuted.

- 26/08** **Swim England Governance review**
- 26/08.1 KR noted that items 5 and 8 on the agenda were merged because of SMu's comprehensive briefing.
- 26/09** **Any other business**
- 26/09.1 JSa proposed that regional staff visit counties to engage with members directly. Counties agreed to consult their Management Boards/Executives and report suggestions for host venues.
- CV highlighted the difficulty of meeting all clubs in one venue and suggested that visits should coincide with county championship attendance.
- 26/09.2 CV also raised concerns about the removal of the £1,000 travel bursary for the National Inter-County Team Championships. Several counties expressed interest in sending a joint letter. He will send contact details to JSa for circulation.
- 26/10** **Confidential items**
- 26/10.1 No confidential items raised.
- 25/11** **Future meetings**
- 26/11.1 Next meeting – 23rd June 2026 at 7pm