Swim England East Region

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors

14th July 2026 at 19:00, via Zoom

Present:	Stewart Murray (SMu)	Regional Chairman
	Keith Belton (KB)	Finance Manager
	Gerry Metcalf (GM)	Vice-Chairman
	Ian Mackenzie (IM)	Director
	Sheila Mackenzie (SMa)	Director
	Helen Stephens (HS)	Director

Also in attendance: Jo Stalley (JSt), Regional Operations Officer

Lottie Thompson (LT), Specialist

Lesley Bryan (LB), Business Engagement Manager, Swim England (Item 26/097)

26/092 Apologies and introductions

26/092.1 Apologies were received from James Salmon (JSa) and Clare Davison (CD).

26/093 Declarations of conflicts of interest

26/093.1 GM declared a conflict of interest regarding item 26/103, Fern and Turner Award nominations. No other declarations were made.

26/094 Minutes

26/094.1 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 9th June 2026 were considered.

26/094.2 SMa noted that, in a tidied version of the minutes, some minor corrections had been made, including typographical amendments and the addition of surnames to individuals referenced within the Matrix update.

26/094.3 LT requested that some wording within publicly available minutes be amended to avoid unnecessary interpretation regarding regional finances and governance matters.

Subject to the agreed amendments, the minutes were approved as an accurate record.

26/095 Matters arising – Action Log

26/095.1 **Water Polo costume stock**

KB advised that contact had now been made and information received regarding the remaining stock.

The intention is to promote the stock through the regional newsletter and refresh inventory records before considering any further disposal action.

26/095.2 **SumUp machine**

KB reported that no progress has yet been made owing to competing priorities, but that work would continue during the quieter summer period.

26/095.3 **HMRC mileage rates**

SMu reported that Swim England has not yet formally communicated any change to mileage arrangements.
KB advised that London Region has reportedly adopted the revised HMRC rate.
IM stated that Swim England has recently revised its expenses policy and he undertook to circulate the latest documentation to Board members.

26/095.4 **Open Water car parking**

The Board noted that the professionally managed parking arrangements approved at the previous meeting had operated successfully during the Open Water Championships.

26/096 Ratification of Items agreed since 7th April

26/096.1 No items required ratification.

26/097 Introduction to Lesley Bryan – Business Engagement Manager

26/097.1 SMu welcomed Lesley Bryan to the meeting and explained that the Board had invited colleagues from Swim England to provide an overview of their roles and responsibilities.

LB introduced herself and outlined her role as Swim England's Business Engagement Manager for the East and London Regions.

26/097.2 Her responsibilities include:

- Supporting swimming pool operators
- Managing relationships with leisure providers
- Supporting swim schools and learn-to-swim programmes
- Assisting with pool closure issues
- Developing partnerships between operators and clubs
- Promoting swimming participation and retention

26/097.3 LB reported that a significant proportion of her recent work had focused on learn-to-swim development and ensuring that swimmers progress successfully into club environments.

26/097.4 SMu asked whether business engagement teams became involved in negotiating pool access and lane availability issues.

LB advised that clubs should first work directly with operators and the club development team. Where necessary, the Business Engagement team could become involved to help facilitate discussions and understand the operator's position.

26/097.5 SMu asked whether there was a limit on how long swimmers could take part before becoming full club members.

LB explained that Club Links was not a trial membership scheme, but a structured 12-week programme jointly supported by Swim England, the operator and the participating club.

26/097.6 KB raised concerns regarding pool hire costs and the ongoing restrictions affecting Dereham pool.

LB confirmed that larger operators, including Lex Leisure and Parkwood, are managed nationally within the Business Engagement structure. She agreed to investigate the issue and direct the enquiry to the appropriate national contact.

26/097.7 The Board thanked LB for attending and providing the update.

LB left the meeting

26/098 Finance

26/098.1 KB advised that the June budget reports had been circulated.

Owing to holiday and recent competition commitments he had not completed a full review prior to the meeting.

Board members were invited to submit any detailed financial queries directly to him for response.

26/098.2 The Board discussed income received relating to Water Polo Inter-Regional competition activity.

Uncertainty remained concerning ownership of the income, hosting responsibilities and financial arrangements associated with Inter-Regional events.

26/098.3 KB asked how Inter-Regional event finances are administered and who ultimately benefits from any surplus or funds received.

IM explained that Inter-Regionals are operated independently of Swim England, with financial administration traditionally managed through West Midlands Region and organisational oversight provided by volunteers from other Regions.

Action: KB to seek clarification regarding Inter-Regional financial arrangements

26/098.4 KB presented the results of the stock review undertaken following the previous meeting.

26/098.4.1 Several items were considered obsolete or beyond economic use.

The Board agreed that obsolete stock should be disposed of where no future use could be identified.

26/098.4.2 SM questioned whether insurance was necessary given the Region had operated successfully without specific stock insurance for many years.

KB advised that the estimated replacement value of stored assets approached £60,000 and represented a material financial risk if lost through fire, theft or other damage

26/098.4.3 Members agreed that a decision could not be made until quotations were obtained

Action: KB to obtain insurance quotations through Swim England's insurance broker

26/098.5 KB presented revised bursary criteria and application documentation.

26/098.5.1 The revisions were intended to:

- Update outdated terminology
- Improve clarity
- Define eligibility more precisely
- Reduce ineligible application
- Clarify support for overseas representation
- Differentiate national competition participation from funded representative activity

26/098.5.2 The Board agreed that the application form should be incorporated directly into the bursary guidance document to ensure that applicants reviewed the criteria before submitting a claim.

26/098.5.3 The revised bursary process was approved subject to minor amendments.

Action: JSa to produce final combined guidance and application document

26/099 Financial planning for 2027

26/099.1 KB presented a detailed analysis of regional affiliation income and membership fee history.

It was noted that:

- Club Train fees had not increased since 2013.
- Club Compete fees had increased by only £1 since 2020.
- The club fee had never been increased.
- Inflationary increases had significantly eroded real-term income.

26/099.2 Current forecasts indicate a deficit this year if no corrective action is taken.

26/099.3 The Board agreed that further modelling should be completed and that a final decision would be taken at the September Board meeting to allow clubs sufficient notice of increases.

26/099.4 It was agreed that fee increases were required in principle to address future deficits.

Action: The final 2027 affiliation fee proposal to be brought to the September Board meeting

26/099.5 The Board also agreed that all disciplines should review event entry fees, training fees and spectator fees as part of the 2027 budgeting process.

Action: All disciplines should review event entry fees, training fees and spectator fees as part of the 2027 budgeting process

26/100 Minutes from the Leadership Group meetings

26/100.1 The Coaches Forum minutes were received. No matters were escalated for Board consideration.

26/101 Risk Register and risk assessments

26/101.1 The Board reviewed the Risk Register and issues log.

26/101.2 No new risks or issues were identified.

26/101.3 Members agreed that ongoing financial planning and affiliation fee reviews were appropriate mitigations against the principal financial risk currently faced by the Region.

26/102 Regional Manager's report

26/102.1 **Bedford Swifts**

The Board discussed the affiliation application submitted by Bedford Swifts.

Concerns had been raised by Bedford Swim Squad regarding the potential impact on existing club activity.

The regional club development team would facilitate discussions between the parties to try to achieve a constructive outcome.

26/102.2 **Leighton Linslade**

The Board noted that Leighton Linslade remained within the permitted affiliation transition period and therefore remained eligible for competition participation.

26/102.3 **Matrix days**

The Board received an update on Matrix days, which are designed to improve collaboration between regional and national teams.

Feedback from attendees has been positive and the programme was helping to strengthen working relationships and understanding.

26/102.4 **Swim England leadership**

The Board noted the appointment of Rebecca Cox as Interim Chief Executive Officer following the resignation of Andy Salmon.

26/103 Fern and Turner Award nominations

26/103.1 GM declared a conflict of interest and took no part in the discussion.

26/103.2 The Board considered two nominations received for the award.

Members agreed that both nominees should be forwarded for national consideration.

26/104 Regional awards

26/104.1 The Board reviewed the arrangements for the 2026 regional awards programme.

26/104.2 Clarification was provided that the Swimming category includes Swimming, Masters and Para Swimming.

26/104.3 The proposed regional awards for 2026 and the proposed timeline for those awards was agreed.

26/105 Any other business

26/105.1 The Board discussed recognition for the East Region Artistic Swimming team following their third-place finish at the Inter-Regional Games.

The Board was disappointed that no medals had been presented by the event organisers.

Action: Formal regional recognition to be arranged for the Artistic Swimming squad

26/105.2 A Board representative was required for the forthcoming Masters meeting. IM agreed to attend.

26/105.3 The Board agreed that the next meeting should be held on 1st September to accommodate everyone's availability.

26/106 Confidential Items

26/106.1 No confidential business was discussed.

26/107 Next Board meeting

26/107.1 The next Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday 1st September 2026 at 19:00 via Zoom.