

Swim England East Region
Minutes of the County Forum meeting
Tuesday 23rd June 2026 at 7pm, via Zoom

In attendance:

Kevin Rumsey (KR)
Phil Pelling (PP)
Angela Eguakhide (AE)
Bryan Thompson (BT)
Sheila Mackenzie (SM)
Ian Cotton (IC)
Chris Vinter (CV)

Norfolk Chairman/Chairman of the meeting
Bedfordshire Secretary
Essex Secretary
Hertfordshire Chairman
Hertfordshire Secretary
Suffolk Chairman
Suffolk Secretary

Also in attendance:

James Salmon (JSa)

Regional Manager

26/12

Apologies, welcome and introductions

- 26/12.1 KR welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 26/12.2 Apologies were received from Stewart Murray (SMu) and Karen Woodhouse (KW).

26/13

Declarations of conflict of interest

- 26/13.1 None declared.

26/14

Previous minutes

- 26/14.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 24th March 2026 had been circulated. No amendments were requested, and the minutes were approved.

26/15

Matters arising

- 26/15.1 No matters arising were raised which were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

26/16

Regional updates

- 26/16.1 In the absence of SMu, JSa provided a regional update. He reported that the Swim England East Region Scorecard has now been in operation for twelve months. Most priorities have been achieved, with some remaining outstanding owing to delays in national Swim England projects.
- JSa advised that planned Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) work had not progressed as anticipated following organisational restructuring within Swim England.
- The Region will now begin reviewing priorities and objectives for the next twelve months and will present these to counties once developed.

- 26/16.2 JSa provided an update on the Swim England Governance Review. Consultation feedback has been received and revised timelines issued. The process is expected to take longer than initially proposed. The review has now entered Phase 2.
- 26/16.3 JSa advised that nominations for the regional Jeff Cook Salver Award have been received and will be considered by the Awards Panel. Swim England will not hold national awards during 2026 because the awards programme is being moved to align with the Summit in March 2027.

26/17

County updates

26/17.1

Essex

AE reported that the county long-course programme at the London Aquatics Centre continues to be well supported by swimmers. Recruiting sufficient coaches remains challenging and options are being explored to increase club coaching support.

Planning for the County's Winter Championships is underway. Owing to increasing venue costs, Essex is considering opening entries to non-county swimmers, with Essex swimmers receiving priority should events become oversubscribed.

AE highlighted concerns regarding the removal of the £1,000 National Inter-County Championships grant and the significant travel costs associated with attending the competition.

26/17.2

Hertfordshire

BT reported that Hertfordshire's development camps had been successfully completed, with positive feedback received from swimmers and coaches.

An open water development event attracted approximately 90 swimmers and included introductory sessions, advanced skills coaching and race opportunities. Although the event operated at a financial loss, it was considered a significant success and a valuable development opportunity.

26/17.3

Suffolk

IC reported that planning for the 2027 County Championships was progressing well. Suffolk's County League Final will take place shortly and participation continues to grow.

A new volunteer has joined the Executive in a coaching development role, enabling the county to restart swimmer development camps.

CV thanked Norfolk for extending invitations to Suffolk swimmers to participate in open water training opportunities.

26/17.4

Bedfordshire

PP reported the appointment of Lisa Richbell as Disability Secretary. Vacancies remain for Chairman and Vice-President.

Following the closure of Tiddenfoot Leisure Centre and the opening of a replacement facility, Leighton Buzzard and Linslade Crusaders have

amalgamated into a single club. A further Club Affiliation enquiry is being progressed in consultation with the Region.

26/17.5

Norfolk

KR reported that the Development Gala and Junior Inter-Club Gala had both been well attended and positively received.

County development activities continue to be successful, including swimmer development days covering swimming, nutrition and athlete wellbeing. Open water training has been expanded to two locations, improving access across the county and enabling participation from neighbouring counties.

Norfolk, like several other counties, is reviewing qualifying times for future championships following increased swimmer participation and performance levels.

AE asked KR whether Essex could meet with Norfolk to discuss the County Chair Forum model and how engagement with club chairs had been developed.

KR welcomed the request and agreed to share Norfolk's experience and approach. He noted that engagement with club chairs had generated valuable strategic feedback and strengthened county-club relationships.

26/18

Club Affiliation and SwimMark update

26/18.1

JSa reported that 23 clubs are currently working through the affiliation process. Progress is in line with expectations for this stage of the cycle.

26/18.2

Swim England has established a working group to determine the future structure of Club Affiliation following the removal of SwimMark.

26/18.3

The development of Swim England's new membership platform continues. The system is planned for launch in Autumn 2026 and will combine membership, affiliation and related administration into a single platform.

26/19

Sarah Barrow – Swim England Club & Community Development Lead

26/19.1

Sarah Barrow did not attend as the meeting finished earlier than anticipated and there was an expected delay to her arrival owing to travelling disruption.

The item was deferred to the next County Forum meeting.

26/20

Any other business

26/20.1

No additional business was raised.

26/21

Confidential items

26/21.1

No confidential items were raised.

26/22

Future meetings

26/22.1 The next meeting will be held on **22nd September 2026 at 7:00pm.**

Action Items

Ref	Action	Owner
26/17	Arrange discussion regarding Norfolk's County Chair Forum approach and club engagement model.	KR / AE
26/19.2	Reschedule Sarah Barrow's introduction and presentation for the September meeting.	JSa