

Minutes subject to approval at the next British Swimming Board Meeting

BRITISH SWIMMING BOARD

**Minutes of the meeting held on the 9th June 2023
GTech Community Stadium, Brentford FC, TW8 9BW**

Present:	Karen Webb-Moss (KW)	Chair
	Corinne Cunningham (CC)	Senior Independent Director
	Jane Nickerson (JMN)	Swim England
	Caroline Green (CG)	Swim England
	Keith Ashton (KA)	Swim England
	Graeme Marchbank (GM)	Scottish Swimming
	Fergus Feeney (FF)	Swim Wales
	Aimee Booker (AB)	Athlete Representative
	David Carry (DC)	Independent Member
	Drew Barrand (DB)	Chief Executive Officer
	Kathreen France (KF)	Director of Finance <i>[item 5.4 only]</i>
	Sarah Powell (SP)	CEO, British Gymnastics <i>[item 6 only]</i>
	Rob Henderson (RMH)	Corporate Strategy Coordinator

47. Welcome and Apologies

47.1 KW welcomed all to the meeting, particularly DB who is attending his first Board.

47.2 The Board acknowledged that this is the first meeting with CC as Senior Independent Director.

47.3 CG sent apologies for the first part of the meeting.

48. Declarations of Interest

No further declarations of interest.

49. Minutes and Matters Arising from the previous meeting

49.1 *Minutes of the meeting held 14th/15th April 2023*

The Minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record.

49.2 *Matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting held 14th/15th April 2023*

49.2.1 25.1.2 – there will be a Safeguarding presentation later in the day from Sarah Powell, CEO of British Gymnastics.

49.2.2 25.2.3 – still ongoing, KF will give a further update in Item 5.4.

- 49.2.3 27.5 – complete
- 49.2.4 37.26 – complete
- 49.2.5 40.2.5 – RMH has taken this action on for the end of June or beginning of July.
- 49.2.6 41.4.5 – complete
- 49.2.7 42.15 – complete
- 49.2.8 42.16 – complete
- 49.2.9 42.18 – to begin from the next meeting
- 49.2.10 43.4.6 – complete
- 49.2.11 45.14 – to be updated during this meeting, item 3.4
- 49.2.12 45.15 – to be updated during this meeting, item 3.4
- 49.2.13 **Action: RMH to continue to develop Board action plan.**

49.3 *Minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) held 23rd May 2023*

- 49.3.1 The Minutes were taken as read. CC gave an update.
- 49.3.2 The new auditors presented the audit plan. ARC recommended to accelerate the process, aiming for sign-off at September Board meeting following an interim ARC. Board agreed with this approach.
- 49.3.3 A Policy Register has been created to allow Board and ARC to understand which policies require updating and when. CC has requested confirmation from the Central Team that the Register is complete.
- 49.3.4 KW cited the World Aquatics policy audit as an important motivator in ensuring a full Register.
- 49.3.5 DB stated that it is important to understand what exists and where gaps may occur. The Register is a starting point for this work.
- 49.3.6 JMN and GM requested that the Register is shared with Home Nations in the interests of collaboration.
- 49.3.7 CC assured the Board that the list will be re-reviewed with regular frequency by ARC, the next instance will be at the October ARC meeting.

49.3.8 **Action: DB to investigate gaps in Policy Register. Following this, CC & DB, on behalf of ARC, to provide Policy update to November Board.**

49.3.9 CC noted that the Whistleblowing Policy was approved by ARC. The Business Continuity plan will need updating due to changes in leadership. The GDPR and Finance action points from the BDO audit are being prioritised.

49.3.10 ARC appreciated the 'Data Deep Dive' DB fed back that the Performance team are doing great work in using data to drive performance. Every time it evolves, it puts more stress on our technical systems, which is a risk.

49.4 *Update from Remunerations Committee (RemCom) held 6th June 2023*

49.4.1 KW updated that there was an additional RemCom held on 8th June. This was to prioritise the former ICEO's transition within the business and to approve his new offer.

49.4.2 KW acknowledged DB's positive approach and is satisfied that every stage of the process has been carried out above and beyond all requirements.

49.4.3 There was some discussion on the responsibility of RemCom in appraising the CEO. Board clarified that the Chair reviews CEO performance, supported by RemCom in terms of approvals of any additional financial reward. Recently there has been a unique necessity for RemCom to have further oversight in reviewing the ICEO performance, this will not be the case moving forwards.

50. Chair Report

50.1 KW is pleased to be working closely with DB, who has met with SMT on numerous occasions, had individual introductory calls with all Board members, has visited most of the High Performance Centres and has had a UK Sport induction.

50.2 KW is aware of the need to develop DB's KPIs, against the Board-approved strategic direction – the SMT and whole organisation KPIs will then follow as set by DB.

50.3 KW noted Swim England's strategy was launched and encouraged a closer consultation between British Swimming and the Home Nations in future strategy iterations. The Home Nations representatives agreed that British Swimming's interest in this area will be reciprocated.

50.4 DB stated British Swimming's need for a new strategy post Paris 2024 and this collaboration is crucial to the sport's future. JMN further stated the need for shared measurable goals, to which the Board agreed. By way of example, KW noted the increase in collaboration between the EDI leads of the Home Nations since the April Board meeting.

50.5 KW updated that the Swim England Chair has asked her support for the CEO of Swim England selection panel.

- 50.6 KW thanked CC for work in recruiting two new INEDs. The process is now at the second interview stage and will be complete by the end of June. The objective is to have an INED who is a specialist in either para-sport, change management/HR and EDI as priority areas.
- 50.7 GM fed back that the process has been well organised and handled, whilst urging caution against inadvertently recruiting a second athlete rep.
- 50.8 AB suggested better utilising aquatics alumni when similar opportunities arise. It is an important piece of work that would gain more exposure. There is a book that some athletes were sent containing the unique legacy number of each athlete. It was intended for each GB athlete, past and present, to be awarded a cap.
- 50.9 JMN identified a current volunteer who keeps a complete record of aquatics statistics and may be willing to help develop work in this area.
- 50.10 **Action: DB to speak with JMN regarding the development of a cross-party alumni development initiative with all Home Nations and allocating gatekeeper resource at British Swimming to run the project.**
- 50.11 KW thanked KA for his work on fairness and parity of Board Remuneration. Work is ongoing between Swim England and the Charities Commission to establish their satisfaction with remuneration of the Swim England representatives.
- 50.12 KA intends to establish consistency across all Board Composition policies. The terms have already changed in England and Scotland, with Wales soon to follow.
- 50.13 KW stated that the second phase of this project will be to remunerate all governance structures within the current budget, as well as a review of contracts to ensure robustness and minimised risk.
- 50.14 KW plans to meet with every Board member for an appraisal. CC will gather feedback from the Board for KW's appraisal.
- 50.15 KW updated on EDI matters. Josh Rudd, alongside the Home Nations leads, have started sharing work and collaborating on projects.
- 50.16 The Board Apprentice scheme is a good opportunity for the Board. The scheme follows a calendar year and the Board is required to provide the chosen individual with eight days of structured learning across the business. They would be an active observer at all Board meetings and some sub-committees.
- 50.17 **Action: DB & Executive to engage Board Apprentice and report back to Board on required actions.**
- 50.18 KW updated on the Revenue & Relevancy working group established by UK Sport. Relevancy is the priority for the working group, working on fan engagement and athlete

profiling. It was suggested that a project be set up to aggregate fan data across Olympic and Paralympic sports to create a central fan base from which all sports could be marketed.

- 50.19 UK Sport is to roll out a pilot project offering a centralised communications resource to NGBs; UK Sport considering other support areas such as safeguarding and performance. KW noted the creation of the Sport Org project in relation to the latter area of a centralised performance resource.
- 50.20 An integrated Board calendar is currently in review, to help the Board be present at Championships and meets. The Board agreed that it would be helpful to have objectives for each event they attend.

51. CEO Report

51.1 *CEO update*

51.1.1 DB gave thanks to the Board and all stakeholders for their support so far. The business environment is supportive and there is a clear desire to perform.

51.1.2 The titles of the slides delivered were:

- The First Month
- Central Observations
- Our Mission Statement
- What does it take to be the best?
- Five Organisational Pillars
- Gap Analysis
- 2024: Organisational Reset

51.1.3 There was some discussion on the two mission statements presented, DB agreed to minor wording changes based on Board feedback.

51.1.4 DC commented on the 'pillars' of the business, stating the need to ensure the order the pillars are displayed do not become a priority list.

51.1.5 The Board further discussed the merits of consultation versus delivery in the time-sensitive situation.

51.1.6 CC suggested the Operations pillar could be titled Business Services to envelope all activities identified within this area.

51.1.7 There was a further suggestion that the Policy pillar could be titled Governance or Principles in line with the work identified.

- 51.1.8 Within the area of Stakeholder Relations, DB emphasised the need to counter the potential threat posed by a change in government / government funding by creating stronger relationships across broader government.
- 51.1.9 DB suggested September/October for an all-business announcement on the new strategic direction.
- 51.1.10 The Board were satisfied with the observations and direction of travel proposed by DB. DB will come back to Board with an action plan in each area.
- 51.1.11 **Action: DB's updated presentation to be shared alongside the Minutes.**
- 51.1.12 **Action: DB to provide Board with an action plan for each pillar at next Board meeting.**
- 51.2** *Commercial update*
- 51.2.1 Commercial strategy update
DB gave a presentation. The titles of the slides were:
- Phased timeline
 - What do sponsors want?
 - Brand
 - Reach – building a multi-layered fan-centric distribution network
 - Access – capturing an engaged aquatic audience through targeted marketing journeys
 - Building out the proposition – how sponsors view the aquatics opportunity
 - Stakeholder collaboration – the commercial value exchange
 - Commercial framework with the Home Nations
 - Resource and funding
 - How our competition is resourced
 - Sports Rights Holder
 - National Governing Bodies
 - British Swimming
 - Investment Model example (low-end)
 - Return on Investment modelling
- 51.2.2 There was detailed discussion on events, broadcast, social, PR and activation – putting the athletes front and centre of the story. Telling stories and creating fan-centric assets creates anticipation and provides consistency of profile. DB wants to get to the heart of these stories as soon as possible.
- 51.2.3 DB stated that the day-to-day focus would be on the individual athlete stories albeit covering the full range of athletes across the WCP and not focusing on the same top-end ones all the time, with a renewed focus on the team at Major Championships. After consultation with the Performance Director, athletes understand the potential of exposure

and many are keen to engage. The Athlete Engagement Group has been identified as the vehicle through which this engagement will initially happen.

51.2.4 FF suggested bringing the Home Nations communications leads come together to discuss a whole-sport communications plan to make the most effective use of existing resource.

51.2.5 DB needs to find a way of creating investment without risking the primary activities of the business. The Board discussed a number of different methods of achieving this, considering timelines and appetite for risk.

51.2.6 KW is interested to see the outcome of the Home Nations Commercial meeting next week.

Brand project update

51.2.7 DB has four brand repositioning slides to be circulated after the meeting due to time constraints. The proposal has been informed by listening to the wider business' concerns over the past five weeks and the stakeholder interview process undertaken during Phase 1 of the commercial strategy.

51.2.8 GM expressed a concern that the timelines outlined in the paper would be difficult to deliver against. DB agreed and emphasised that those timelines were to enable British Swimming to meet the kit deadlines laid out initially by Speedo. DB agreed to revisit this discussion and look to create a more achievable timeline for the process. There is a need to do this pre-Games to maximise effectiveness without rushing the project.

51.2.9 DB requested funding to be drawn from the reserves for commercial development with a focus on the branding of the business and creating a sales process.

51.2.10 It was identified that the amount agreed would need to be acceptable within the current reserves policy as set by ARC, stipulating minimum reserves of £550k.

51.2.11 **Action: DB to share rebrand brief and revised timelines with Board.**

Diving World Cup Super Final

51.2.12 DB introduced the paper, citing the positive effect hosting this event would have on International Relations and athlete moral pre-Paris. The main challenge is the budget, with World Aquatics currently expecting in principle for British Swimming to underwrite the entirety of the event.

51.2.13 DB further clarified that it may be possible to reduce this risk with contributions from World Aquatics, London Aquatics Centre and UK Sport. Economies of scale mean it is more worthwhile creating a hosting strategy for this event for the next three years.

51.2.14 Following a suggestion from JMN, DB agreed to investigate the usage of Performance travel budget against this event.

51.2.15 GM advised that the Board had experienced a similar situation previously and the Board had decided they would not be the final underwriter again, especially where the financial exposure is significant. It was noted that the Board was traditionally comfortable with an exposure of between £60-100k for an event such as this with the capability to cover those costs through local commercial rights sales.

51.2.16 **Action: DB agreed to discuss the exposed financial position further with World Aquatics and negotiate with all parties to see if it was possible to drive the financial risk within the acceptable limit above based on historical learnings.**

51.3 *Performance update*

51.3.1 The BAU report was taken as read. DB opened the floor to questions.

51.3.2 DB advised that when the 'Walk the Floor' report is received by the Performance Director, currently expected to be shared with CS by UK Sport at the end of July, he will ensure that it will then be shared with the Board.

51.3.3 **Action: Walk the Floor report to be sent to Board once received.**

51.3.4 Board agreed that the Performance Director should be invited to the 2nd (April) and 5th (November) Board meetings of each cycle, with SMT being invited to the 5th.

51.4 *Operations update*

Finance update

51.4.1 KF joined the meeting via Zoom.

51.4.2 Following a request from GM, KF agreed to provide a quarterly phasing budget for the World Class Programmes. These are submitted to UK Sport as well.

51.4.3 **Action: KF to quarterly report on WCP phasing, with mid-report in June.**

51.4.4 **Action: Risk Register to be provided in .xls format for future Board meetings.**

51.4.5 **Action: ARC rep to deliver Risk Register update to Board after each ARC meeting.**

Olympic Games Ticket Allocations

51.4.6 DB introduced the paper. British Swimming have received a lower than previous allocation due to overall reductions in the BOA's central pot. British Swimming will continue to push for additional tickets.

51.4.7 It was also raised that the low allocations for athlete's family and friends have been historically a major issue. DB stated that he is investigating the possibility of providing further tickets, per athlete for friends and family through a sponsor-funded initiative.

51.4.8 The Board agreed that it would be inappropriate for the Board to be prioritised in terms of the British Swimming allocations allowing for the focus to be on performance and commercial requirements. Board members are willing to purchase if and where appropriate.

51.4.9 DB requested some flex in final allocations so that the Performance team get what they need and there is the opportunity to improve stakeholder relations. It is anticipated that there will be some tickets available in the run-up to the Games and it is important to strategise around this.

51.4.10 **Decision: The Olympic Games Ticket Allocations Paper was approved.**

BAU Report

51.4.11 The BAU report was taken as read. There were no questions.

51.5 *Policy update*

BAU report

51.5.1 The BAU report was taken as read. There were no questions.

Executive Director of Business Affairs and General Counsel role

51.5.2 Remunerations Committee have reviewed the new role of 'Executive Director of Business Affairs and General Counsel' to be offered to Ash Cox, and have approved the approach. The supporting documents were provided to the Board as a courtesy.

51.5.3 DB clarified that the Director of People will report into this role.

51.5.4 **Action: DB will now finalise the contracting and communicate the new role to SMT and then the wider business.**

51.6 *Stakeholder Relations update*

51.6.1 DB summarised the previous discussion in Item 50 regarding Home Nation strategies. There is an International Relations group on Monday 12th June where objectives will be discussed especially with the upcoming trip to Japan for the World Aquatics Congress.

51.6.2 GM requested an update on World Para-swimming being based in Manchester, which DB will investigate.

52. Strategic Focus

52.1 Sarah Powell, CEO of British Gymnastics, joined the meeting via Zoom to give a Safeguarding overview to the Board.

52.2 SP shared a video with the Board: <https://youtu.be/-ioAF7bkzBE>

52.3 The slide titles were:

- Overview
- British Gymnastics
- Organigram
- Welfare & Safe Sport Directorate
- Reflections
- Faced with...
- Response and Re-Focus
- Performance shift – a culture of performing
- Reform '25
- CEO thoughts on Safeguarding
- The future – UK Safe Sport Collective
- Questions?

- 52.4 The Board discussed a number of matters arising from the presentation with SP.
- 52.5 SP updated that the ongoing discussions with UK Sport and DCMS were positive around the need for the UK Wide system to look at how an approach to safe sport for everyone could be addressed and the need for independence in this.
- 52.6 British Gymnastics co-agree Individual Gymnast Plans written between coaches and elite athletes that are reviewed bi-monthly. This provides greater ownership and buy in to their own development and goals by the gymnast. These contracts are shared with parents and the Performance team where appropriate. This was well received by the Board.
- 52.7 KW thanked SP for the presentation and opened up the discussion to wider reflections from the Board.
- 52.8 DB proposed that a pathway between Home Nations and British Swimming would be of benefit to a safe system. CG agreed and emphasised the need for transparency towards the athletes when performance expectations increase.
- 52.9 GM stated the responsibility of GB coaches to be role models. Coaching styles will vary but the Performance environment can still be consistent.
- 52.10 AB emphasised the importance of the athlete owning their own education, expectations and performance. The reality is that funding and performance is based on these co-agreed goals.
- 52.11 The Board discussed current welfare provision for the Performance team. It was fed back that there is a psychologist available for staff to utilise as well as a strong line management structure.
- 52.12 CG identified the need for athletes and staff to be in a culture psychological safety, in order to have honest and open dialogue.

- 52.13 **Action: Board to review and understand the Safeguarding structures within British Swimming. Engage the new Safeguarding working group in this work.**
- 52.14 CG recommended preventative work, asking Insurers how to avoid Safeguarding claims. DB agreed, suggesting an analysis of where British Swimming currently is, followed with an analysis of exposure points.
- 52.15 KW summarised with SP's approach to talking about People, Positivity, Experience and a welfare-led environment leading to self-actualisation, positive mind-sets and healthy training programmes.
- 53. AOB**
FF updated that Allen Bewley will be retiring as Swim Wales Chair in November 2023. An Interim Chair will be appointed.
- 54. Date of next meeting**
- 54.1** *8th/9th September 2023* – to include joint meeting with Swim England.
KW and AB will not be able to attend September meeting. KW will try to call in for some of the meeting and CC will Chair in KW's absence.
- 54.2** *Board dates for 2024*
- 54.2.1 To be discussed via e-mail. UK Sport & DCMS dates to be included in overall calendar.
Home Nations meeting dates to be included.
- 54.2.2 **Action: KW requested that Board members send any key absence dates to RMH for collation.**