



Minutes subject to approval at the next British Swimming Board Meeting

BRITISH SWIMMING BOARD

**Minutes of the meeting held on the 14th – 15th April 2023
Hyatt Regency, Stratford, E20 1GL**

Present:	Karen Webb-Moss (KW)	Chair
	Ash Cox (AC)	Interim CEO
	Richard Hookway (RH)	Swim England, on behalf on JN
	Caroline Green (CG)	Swim England (Friday from 7pm)
	Keith Ashton (KA)	Swim England
	Graeme Marchbank (GM)	Scottish Swimming
	Corinne Cunningham (CC)	Independent Member
	Aimee Booker (AB)	Athlete Representative (via Zoom)
	David Carry (DC)	Independent Member
	Kathreen France (KF)	Director of Finance
	Chris Spice (CS)	Performance Director (Friday only)
	Wendy Lockton (WL)	Director of Corporate Strategy and Planning
	Rob Henderson (RMH)	Corporate Strategy Coordinator
	Kirsten Phillips (KP)	Scotland Swimming (Friday - item 37 only)
	Zita Cameron (ZC)	Swim Wales (Friday - item 37 only)
	Sioned Williams (SW)	Swim Wales (Friday - item 37 only)
	Philip Brownlie (PB)	Swim England (Friday - item 37 only)
Apologies:	Jane Nickerson (JN)	Swim England
	Fergus Feeney (FF)	Swim Wales
	Mike Hawkes (MH)	Swim England (item 37 only)
	Josh Rudd (JR)	British Swimming (item 37 only)

34. Friday 14th April - Welcome and Apologies

- 34.1 KW welcomed everybody to the meeting. Apologies were received from JN and FF.
- 34.2 It was noted that AB was calling in via Zoom but has been delayed. CG will join as soon as possible.
- 34.3 KW welcomed RMH to the meeting with a brief introduction.
- 34.4 KW acknowledged the role of AC as Interim CEO and presented AC with a token of thanks for efforts in leading the organisation during his tenure as Interim CEO. AC has the Board's support moving forwards. AC expressed his thanks for the Board's support throughout the past year.

- 34.5 KW outlined the meeting Agenda, introducing AC to update the Board on the commercial strategy.
- 35. British Swimming Brand review and commercial strategy**
- 35.1 AC delivered a presentation on the progress since the Board's (February) workshop on the potential for a branding review and the development of a commercial strategy.
- 35.2 After discussion, key USPs were considered to be a strong team ethos and access to athletes. Key threats were identified as brand confusion and claiming to be a fully inclusive sport.
- 35.3 AB joined the meeting via Zoom.
- 35.4 GM believes that British Swimming needs to outwardly represent all aquatics and is uniquely placed to control the narrative that the public consumes.
- 35.5 There was a detailed discussion on ethics and due diligence in engaging a sponsor or partner, to ensure shared brand and a good audience fit. It is further important to ensure the organisations have shared values with British Swimming.
- 35.6 There was a further discussion on the importance of grassroots appeal and engagement with the core audience of family and friends of competing athletes.
- 35.7 AC stated that for all potential name-change options, Intellectual Property requirements have been worked through.
- 35.8 KW explained that any discipline-specific branding could remain an external-facing exercise, in order to retain strong brand efficiency.
- 35.9 KA cited the recent British Gymnastics Championships selling ~6,000 tickets for each day. This should be a measure of success rather than a method.
- 35.10 AC outlined next steps – individual and group consultations with Home Nation CEOs and a workshop in May once the new CEO Drew Barrant is on board so he will now drive this commercial strategy and attend this meeting once up to speed. The objective is to achieve a strong collaborative approach to the commercial strategy where all assets are mapped for sponsor appeal and comprehension of 'the offer'.
- 35.11 KW gave thanks to AC for the presentation and acknowledged his work with the Chair on getting this vital piece of work started. KW stated that DB will pick this up when he starts in May.
- 36. High Performance Update**
- 36.1 CS thanked the Board for the invitation and gave an update.

- 36.2 The overall feeling is that the programme is in a good place. We won four silver medals at the Diving World Cup in China which is pleasing considering the logistical issues.
- 36.3 The slide titles were:
- Introduction
 - Diving update - international and national
 - Para swimming - international, WCP, other areas
 - Olympic Swimming – update, Project Paris workshop
 - Is the best truly yet to come...?
- 36.4 There was discussion on the succession plan for the Head of Performance Systems, who left the business in March.
- 36.5 DC requested more information on the increase in para-athletes entering the programme. CS believes this is down to improving outreach, connectivity, and classification resource. It was clarified that joint training camps between para-swimming and swimming are challenging due to the differing training cycles of the athletes. CS offered some detail on the changing qualifying times during the British Championships. A proactive approach will result in the strongest team being selected for the World Championships and avoided the overuse of discretionary picks.
- 36.6 AB shared some positive experiences related to the “One Team” ethos and the confidence gained through being an athlete representative on other Boards – both of which helped with a transition out of the World Class Performance programme.
- 36.7 CS requested the Board’s help in two key areas:
- Support and consideration for the appropriate recognition of staff who consistently go above and beyond their remit so that we retain staff
 - Support to encourage LEN and World Aquatics to make decisions more quickly, specifically as it relates to competition calendars quicker
- 36.8 KW gave thanks to CS, requesting that the Board’s thanks be passed to the wider team.
- 37. EDI / ESG workshop**
- 37.1 KW welcomed ZC, SW, KP and PB to the meeting via Zoom.
- 37.2 Scottish Swimming update – Kirsten Phillips (KP)
KP delivered a verbal update.
- 37.3 Scottish Swimming have accomplished much with regards to equality but recognise the need to do more. The devolved Government has two foci – multiple deprivation and women in sport.

- 37.4 School swimming is often the only opportunity that children get to learn to swim. A project is being piloted with Sport Scotland, targeting a deprived area and children that wouldn't usually have the opportunity.
- 37.5 There is a strong female presence across Scottish Swimming's members, board, staff and senior management team. There are many female coaches on the pool deck, but few are seen on the national stage. A continuing project was launched in 2015 to normalise the participation of women in sport beyond teenage years.
- 37.6 Female health in sport is featuring more regularly on media platforms. Hannah Miley has been supportive with the promotion of ongoing work concerning periods.
- 37.7 Para and disability swimming is a key success indicator; Scottish Disability Sport consider Scottish Swimming to be an example of best practice.
- 37.8 Fairness of competition will be at the heart of any Transgender competition policy.
- 37.9 Several clubs have reached out to refugee groups, inviting them to train and compete. Women only sessions have been requested by some due to religious beliefs and these are accommodated where possible.
- Swim Wales update – Zita Cameron (ZC) and Sioned Williams (SW)
- 37.10 ZC introduced the update. Swim Wales is investigating a learning platform, which will provide a series of education opportunities for members. There is a desire for Clubs to have balanced and skilled Committees that can inspire others.
- 37.11 SW shared a presentation and the title of the slides were:
- Our EDI Framework – “Cynnwys” [Include]
 - The What?
 - The How?
 - Current activity – April 2023
 - Education Series
 - Timeline
 - Master Logo
- 37.12 SW requested further collaboration in terms of policies, resources, messaging and decision-making.
- Swim England update – Mike Hawkes (MH)
- 37.13 Philip Brownlee (PB) attended on behalf of Swim England. MH was not present and a pre-recorded presentation was played to the Board.
- 37.14 The slide titles were:

- Agenda
- Our Approach
- Ongoing Work
- Policy Updates
- Resource Production & Training
- Challenges

37.15 www.swimming.org/inclusion contains further information.

37.16 CG joined the meeting in-person.

British Swimming update – Josh Rudd

37.17 JR was not present and a pre-recorded presentation was played to the Board.

37.18 The slide titles were:

- Awareness, Visibility, Embedding
- Current Landscape – EDI
- Current Landscape – RRI (Race Representation Index)
- Comparison with other NGBs
- Key Projects
- Communications and Events
- Transgender Policy Update
- Other points – DIAP and Pooling Resources
- Inclusion Advisory Group

Initial Discussion

37.19 Those who had presented agreed that currently collaboration levels in this area were not good enough and that more needed to be done to improve this.

37.20 There was a detailed discussion on the requirement and usability of setting targets for EDI across BS and the home nations. The Board sought to ensure that a clear emphasis and pathway can be put in place to break down barriers in this area of work. A diverse talent pool would be welcomed and any support the Board can give to this goal will be given.

37.21 The Board will require further discussion in order to understand their role in creating a difference. The Inclusion Advisory Group is a good starting point and will provide a wealth of lived experiences to shape this discussion.

37.22 KW thanked all Home Nations representatives for the presentations, efforts and time.

Board discussion

37.23 Key questions were posed to the Board, and will need to be discussed at a future meeting.

- How can British Swimming increase awareness and representation across the organisation?
 - How does British Swimming, as the visible body of aquatic sports on the national and international stage, drive inclusion?
 - How is diversity and inclusion embedded across the whole organisation and how is commitment shown?
- 37.24 KW challenged the Board to think of what can be done to change gradually, realistically and have a positive impact in this area.
- 37.25 The composition of the Board was discussed, including the important need of ensuring the Board is inclusive and representative.
- 37.26 **Action: KW to reach out to Black Swimming Association and British Swimming to ensure that the Candidate Brief for vacant INED positions has been broadly promoted to embrace inclusivity.**
- 37.28 The meeting ended for the Friday 14 April evening, to be resumed Saturday 15 April.
- 38. Saturday 15th April – Welcome and Apologies**
- 38.1 KW reopened the meeting on Saturday morning and welcomed everyone. KW thanked AB for attending the meeting via Zoom and WL for the work planning the April Board meeting.
- 38.2 Apologies were received from Jane Nickerson and Fergus Feeney. Welcome to RH who is attending on behalf of JN.
- 39. Declarations of Interest**
- 39.1 GM declared his role in the Inclusion and Diversity workshop for LEN.
- 39.2 No further interests were declared in addition to the annual list compiled.
- 40. Minutes and Matters Arising from the previous meeting**
- 40.1 Minutes of the meeting held 10th – 11th February 2023
- 40.1.1 KW stated a desire for a modern, accessible approach to the Board Minutes in the future, working alongside RMH and WL to achieve this. The formatting of papers will be reviewed to ensure efficiency and emphasis, and this will be discussed with the new CEO.
- 40.1.2 The Minutes of 10th and 11th February 2023 were confirmed by the Board.
- 40.2 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held 10th – 11th February 2023
- 40.2.1 Minutes 23.5, 23.11.1, 28.3, 28.4, 28.5, 29.5, 30.2 and 30.3 were considered resolved as per the Matters Arising paper.
- 40.2.2 Minute 23.10 – KF to consider a low-risk investment strategy.
- 40.2.3 Minute 25.2.3 – work regarding the details of the World Class budgets is ongoing (KF).

- 40.2.4 Minute 27.5 – work with the Home Nations regarding safeguarding is ongoing (AC).
- 40.2.5 **Action – WL to organise Chair’s meeting for June 2023.**
- 40.2.6 Minute 28.1 – UK Sport are attending performance centres in April and May, with CS and AC set to be present in Bath.
- 40.2.7 Minute 23.11.2 and 25.1.2 will be updated at the June Board meeting.
- 40.2.8 Minute 32.3 was dismissed.
- 40.2.9 **Decision: The Minutes of the British Swimming Board, held 10th and 11th February 2023, were approved.**
- 41. Finance, Audit & Risk**
- 41.1 Director of Finance Report
- 41.1.1 KF led the report, which was taken as read.
- 41.2 British Swimming and World Class Programme management accounts for 11 months ended 28.02.23
- 41.2.1 The overall picture for the central accounts remains static, with a likely End of Year surplus of £15k.
- 41.3 Commentary on BS & WCP management accounts for 11 months ended 28.02.23
- 41.3.1 The report was taken as read.
- 41.3.2 KF clarified that the World Class Programme was still underspent for the year. AC stated that this was primarily in Para Swimming due to a difficulty in obtaining classification opportunity and an increase in training camps. This has been resolved and there will be a significant uplift in spending moving towards Paris 2024, which is normal one year out from the Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- 41.3.3 KF further clarified that there has been a determined effort to be frugal in light of the extra costs traditionally incurred in years 3 and 4 of the Olympic and Paralympic cycle.
- 41.4 Draft budget for the Year ended 31.03.24
- 41.4.1 KF delivered a presentation.
- 41.4.2 The slide titles were:
- British Swimming 23/24 budget highlights
 - Operating Statement summary
 - Income summary
 - World Class contributions
 - Expenditure summary

- Budgeted SLA charges from Swim England
- Overall financial risks and opportunities
- WCP Budget highlights

Central budget discussion

- 41.4.3 KF is budgeting a £81k deficit next year, versus a £15k surplus last year. This was due to some additional committed expenditure as previously discussed. Budgeted reserves will sit at £656k.
- 41.4.4 KA clarified that the current inflation rate is not fully included in the figures so there will be an effective reduction in reserves. A small amount of inflation is budgeted for (2-4%).
- 41.4.5 With regards to income, KF updated that approximately 50% of Home Nation contributions are already guaranteed, with the Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) at a draft stage. There was some discussion around the suitability of applying inflationary increases to the MoU, which is a matter for the executive not Board.
- 41.4.6 CC suggested that there should be a target for commercial income, as this is an area that is currently being invested in. There was general agreement for this.
- 41.4.7 With regards to expenditure, KF highlighted the additional costs, clarifying the process for renting office space from Swim England and clarifying the small indexation on other costs. All other costs remain within expectations. Board remuneration parity has been considered and included.
- 41.4.8 KA queried the grant support available for EDI work. AC responded that there was very little that was accessible to British Swimming. The WCP was asked to cover 20% of the new role and a further discussion will take place when the new CEO is in role.
- 41.4.9 KF clarified that costs associated with the IAG are not included in the Diversity budget line and this is a risk. There is a possibility of UK Sport funding regarding Sustainability.
- 41.4.10 AC stated that the recent salary increase was received positively across the organisation, particularly the principle of a sliding scale.
- 41.4.11 There was some discussion around the layout and suitability of the Head Office space. It is clear that staff value a HQ and it may be that more meeting rooms would be appropriate in the layout.
- 41.4.12 AC was confident that there will be mitigation to the commercial underwrite of the WPS World Championships in Manchester 2023.
- 41.4.13 The Board had a detailed discussion concerning brand opportunity and the associated financial risks / opportunities.

- 41.4.14 KF stated that there has been a positive approach to this budget. There has already been work to reduce the deficit prior to seeking Board approval as we enter a new era of commercial acumen.
- 41.4.15 **Action – KF to deliver regular update to Board on “Overall Financial Risks and Opportunities”**
- 41.4.16 KF requested Board to approve the 2023-24 Central budget containing a £81k deficit, with a further commitment to an investment policy and increased analysis of income opportunities.
- 41.4.17 **Decision: The Board unanimously approved the 23/24 Central budget. However, the Board felt that the approved budget should be a worst-case scenario rather than the target to be achieved.**
- 41.4.18 World Class Programmes
- 41.4.19 The slide titles were:
- WCP budget highlights
 - UK Sport Cycle Funding Comparison
 - Paris Cycle Funding including carry forward from Tokyo
 - Operating statement summary
 - Swimming expenditure
 - Diving expenditure
 - Para swimming expenditure
 - Budget risks and opportunities
- 41.4.20 KW queried whether there has been a challenge on higher-cost camps in locations abroad. AC stated that this choice ultimately rests with the Performance Director. AB further stated that this financial year represented the first return to China and Australia for competition since COVID, this may be what is reflected in the report.
- 41.4.21 The Board requested to monitor the sustainability aspect of travel and camps, in preparation for any extra stipulations from UK Sport in the next funding cycle.
- 41.4.22 KF detailed that Swimming expenditure figures may improve if athlete attendance at the 2024 World Championships is lower than anticipated. If there is an underspend, KF will review with the Performance team in order to protect UK Sport funding.
- 41.4.23 KF requested Board to approve the 2023-24 World Class Programme budget.
- 41.4.24 **Decision: Board approved 23/24 World Class Programme budget.**
- 41.4.25 KW congratulated KF on her Directorship.

42. Chair's Report

- 42.1 Drew Barrand joins British Swimming as CEO on 2nd May. His first week will be spent meeting the Senior Management Team and this will include an all-staff call. He has been introduced to CEOs of Home Nations and to each Board member by the Chair and meetings with each will be arranged. He will then focus on external meetings with UK Sport, other NGB CEOs.etc.
- 42.2 **Action – WL to clarify with Drew who will be supporting him in diary management.**
- 42.3 Drew's priorities are to understand, review, and assess British Swimming, including the status and performance of the business and organisation. There will be an emphasis on commercial strategy. The Board is expecting good progress in this area early on in his tenure.
- 42.4 There was an update on the recruitment and appointment of a Senior Independent Director. A high calibre field of candidates applied for the role, which has been recruited at a time of transition for the British Swimming Board.
- 42.5 AC has made UK Sport aware of the challenges faced by the members of the Nomination Committee and has tabled the Board and independent members who have stepped up to support this process.
- 42.6 CC left the room due to a conflict of interest.
- 42.7 KW updated that the recruitment process for the SID role was complete, with the shortlisted candidates being strong across a range of areas. The panel was looking for complimentary skills as well as filling skills gaps on the Board.
- 42.8 KW proposed that Corinne Cunningham is appointed as Senior Independent Director and the Board approved this appointment.
- 42.9 **Decision – CC appointed as Senior Independent Director to the British Swimming Board.**
- 42.10 CC returned to the meeting.
- 42.11 KW gave a further update on the recruitment of an Independent Non-Executive Director (INED). There are now two positions available due to CC being appointed as Senior Independent Director.
- 42.12 KW stated a willingness to review applications previously received, as well as utilising specialist recruiters to ensure diversity through any new applications.
- 42.13 CG stated that technical understanding of wellbeing and safeguarding would be a key experience area for any candidates.

- 42.14 Following a suggestion from GM, KW agreed that coaching and mentoring a less experienced candidate would offer equality of opportunity. The Board advocated the appointment of a “Board Apprentice” as an INED, through the engagement of the not-for-profit organisation Board Apprentice.
- 42.15 **Action – KW to review the long list of INED candidates. WL to check with Director of People that the role was posted on the specialist recruiter websites (including all accessibility requirements).**
- 42.16 **Action – WL to engage with Board Apprentice regarding INED requirements, informing Josh Rudd.**
- 42.17 KA queried Board quoracy if all Home Nations were not present. It was clarified that two Home Nations are required for Board quoracy.
- 42.18 **Action – WL / RMH to add quoracy requirements to Agendas moving forwards.**
- 42.19 KW reported that UK Sport had a CEO / Chair conference which KW and AC attended. From this UK Sport NGB Summit came the establishment of a number of smaller working groups. KW is on the Relevancy & Revenue Working Group and they have met three times already.
- 42.20 KW fed back that while there is an ambition to increase non-grant income, the ability to do this is normally restricted. The group looked at case studies of elite product innovation – for example the Hockey Pro League which is already seeing returns against their ten-year plan.
- 42.21 Other NGBs were interested in British Swimming’s commercial strategy work, KW had presented to the working group our commercial approach so far ensuing that only the non-sensitive aspects of our work were shared. Other sports are interested to see what British Swimming does next. KW informed the Board that the BOA will play a role within the working group and NGBs are looking for BOA to do more to benefit all sports.
- 42.22 A private discussion took place with Board members concerning the administration of future Board meetings.
- 43. General matters / for information**
- 43.1 CEO appointment Update
- 43.1.1 Drew Barrand has been appointed as CEO and starts on 2nd May 2023.
- 43.2 Commercial report
- 43.2.1 This item was covered extensively previously in the meeting, no further updates were required.
- 43.3 International Influence report
- 43.3.1 GM delivered a short verbal report.

- 43.3.2 GM recently attended the LEN Bureau. Minutes are available online. GM and KW will attend the AQUA Congress in Japan on 24 July, with an expectation that World Aquatics will clarify their approach to the Open category. British Swimming's approach can then be finalised.
- 43.3.3 LEN's Water Polo Committee are keen to invest in underdeveloped Water Polo countries. This may lead to an investment opportunity, with an offer for key Serbian stakeholders to support British Swimming on improving Water Polo performance.
- 43.3.4 GM stated the need to understand athletes' perspectives on Russian and Belarussian athletes competing under a neutral flag in Paris 2024. AB responded that independence is key in an athlete's mind, proven clean competitors will always be welcomed in competition.
- 43.3.5 GM updated that British Swimming remains in discussion with Swim Ireland to co-host the LEN conference in Belfast and are reviewing the opportunity to host the World Learn to Swim Conference.
- 43.3.6 KW thanked GM for the report.
- 43.4 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion report
- 43.4.1 AC presented the Terms of Reference for the British Swimming Inclusion Advisory Group. It was clarified that this isn't a Board created sub-committee and is a starting point, with the potential to coalesce an all-nations group in the future.
- 43.4.2 GM gave detailed feedback to AC concerning removal of committee members, term length, protected characteristics and quoracy.
- 43.4.3 RH fed back that the Board should identify an ideal make-up, to ensure those we are trying to represent are being fairly represented in the structure. There was general agreement to be specific about the sourcing of Independent Members to the IAG.
- 43.4.4 AB suggested inviting all athletes to be a part of the group, citing the high likelihood of the athletes in our target area coming forward.
- 43.4.5 CG shared experiences of setting up a similar scheme in the workplace where nothing previously existed. This relied on welcoming interest and best practice from all.
- 43.4.6 **Action – CG to meet with Josh Rudd to pass on experiences and structures.**
- 43.4.7 **Action - AC to send Terms of Reference to CG.**
- 44. Items for decision**
- 44.1 World Aquatics – Funding Conditions
- 44.1.1 AC clarified that the Board review required would be self-assessment, with 150 indicators.

44.1.2 **Decision: The Board approved the World Aquatics funding conditions.**

44.2 Inclusion Advisory Group (IAG) Terms of Reference

44.2.1 **Decision: The Board deferred approval, pending improvements.**

44.3 Athlete Leadership Group (ALG) Terms of Reference

44.3.1 **Decision: The Board approved the ALG Terms of Reference.**

44.3.2 AB will be creating a video to explain the Athlete Leadership Group to athletes and other stakeholders, to emphasise the athlete representation.

45. AOB

45.1 CC identified the absence of an Ethics policy.

45.2 **Action – Director of People to review other NGB Ethics policies with a view to creating a British Swimming policy.**

45.3 CG queried the unsatisfactory kit for female divers. WL updated that there has been some movement and new suits should be provided prior to the World Championships.

45.4 AB fed back the need for all kit to be comfortable for athletes to wear and athletes should be supported in this.

45.5 AC clarified that “Walk the Floor” will include a senior staff member in all aspects. KW sees an opportunity for Board member engagement.

45.6 AC received feedback on the all-sport proposal for an Independent Welfare body and clarified that it is a very early proposal that does not yet carry Government support.

45.7 KA updated the Board on the work Remunerations Committee are undertaking on Board remuneration. There has been good collaborative fact-finding work with the Home Nations to establish why we currently have lack of parity as some members are paid to perform Director duties and others are not.

45.8 KA clarified that the Wales CEO does not sit ex-officio on the British Swimming Board as previously understood.

45.9 There is also a level of consciousness around any lack of remuneration creating a barrier in an EDI context, and there is a question whether committee members should be remunerated to remove these barriers as well.

45.10 Resolving the issue of parity for the Board is relatively simple, through the remuneration of all Board members including Home Country representatives.

45.11 KA also reported that there are some governance nuances regarding the periods of representation that each home country applies to respective directors, which are not



aligned to the 2x 4year limit of the Chair, INED, NEDs and Athlete representative. A Governance overview of British Swimming's Board terms would resolve this matter.

- 45.12 RH stated that Swim England would like to take advice on the remuneration of their representatives due to their charitable status of Swim England. It was advised that those affected will not receive remuneration until the issue has been resolved.
- 45.13 KA confirmed that RemCom were also continuing to investigate the potential to adopt a 'per diem' payment mechanism that could include Committee members, mindful that this did not impact adversely on the overall Governance budget.
- 45.14 **Action - KA to clarify the ability to remunerate Swim England representatives (that are also trustees of Swim England), seeking legal advice and if necessary securing approval from The Charities Commission.**
- 45.15 **Action - KA to continue with Remunerations Committee the exploration of 'Per Diem' payment mechanism and/or any other 'fair' and non-exclusionary mechanism.**
- 45.16 CG stated the importance of ensuring an appropriate amount of Committees.
- 46. Date of next meeting**
- 46.1 9th – 10th June 2023, Brentford Football Club