



Minutes subject to approval at the next British Swimming Board Meeting

**BRITISH SWIMMING BOARD
Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd April 2020 via Zoom**

Present:	Maurice Watkins	Chair
	Jack Buckner	CEO
	Alex Kelham	Swim England
	Keith Ashton	Swim England
	Jane Nickerson	Swim England
	Graeme Marchbank	Scottish Swimming
	Fergus Feeney	Swim Wales
	Peter Littlewood	Independent Member
	Adele Stach-Kevtiz	Independent Member
	David Carry	Independent Member
	Corinne Cunningham	Independent Member
	Graham Edmunds	Athlete Representative
	Ash Cox	Director of Legal & Governance (DOLG)
	Kathreen France	Head of Finance (HOF)
	Wendy Lockton	Director of Business Operations (DOBO)

30. Welcome and Apologies

30.1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting which was taking place by Zoom due to the current situation with regards to Covid-19. Corinne Cunningham was welcomed to her first Board meeting since recently joining the Board as an Independent Member.

31. Declarations of Interest

None received.

32. Matters Arising from the meeting held 7th-8th February 2020

32.1. 16.3.3.1 – The Board were informed that Swim England have agreed they will co-fund Artistic Swimming. Unfortunately at this point in time British Swimming has no ability to co-fund and a paper outlining this has been sent to UK Sport. Subsequently the Chairman, the CEO and the Director of Legal and Governance have attended a meeting with UK Sport to discuss the organisational health which was a positive meeting. The narrative of the meeting was UK Sport asking what it could do for British Swimming and the areas of challenge and opportunity.

32.2. 16.3.3.2 – Jack to update the Board on the UK Sport investment process later in the meeting.

32.3. 20.3 – The Board were informed that the meeting scheduled with David Carry and the CEO's to discuss the Swimming in Britain strategy had been postponed due to Covid-19. The CEO updated the Board that the CEO's had discussed this at their Home Country Partnership meeting earlier that day and this meeting would be rescheduled in the near future. There continues to be a strong willingness to collaborate and identify key areas to work together on moving forward and this is an ideal opportunity to plan for the future.

- 32.4. 22.1 – Following the request for a small adjustment to the Minutes from the November 2019 meeting the Board were informed that the adjustment had been made and the revised Minutes had been circulated and published.
- 32.5. 23.2.4 – The Head of Finance to present the 2020/2021 budget to the Board later in the meeting.
- 32.6. 25.1 – The Board were informed that the International Influence dinner planned for during the FINA Diving World Series in London in March had been cancelled due to Covid-19.
- 32.7. 25.4 – The Board were informed that the HR team have been in contact with the international cohort of staff during the Brexit process to ensure that those who may be impacted felt at ease to raise anything with the organisation. No issues have been identified.
- 32.8. 26.2 – The Director of Legal and Governance had circulated an update on the latest situation with regards to the BOA Rule 40 to the Board earlier in the week. The Director of Legal and Governance reminded the Board of the background behind the BOA's amendment to the Rule.
- 32.9. 27.4.2 – The Board were informed that the systems in place to support athletes should classification go against them continue to be monitored by the Performance Director for Para Swimming and his team. All classifications have currently been postponed due to Covid-19.
- 32.10. 27.4.3 – The CEO updated the Board on the latest position with regards to the bid for the 2023 World Para Swimming World Championships. British Swimming are due before the UK Sport major events panels on the 15th April. The bid is looking positive. A further update will be brought to the June Board meeting.
- 33. Minutes of the meeting held 7th-8th February 2020**
- 33.1. The Minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.
- 34. Finance, Audit and Risk**
- 34.1. The Head of Finance provided the Board with an overview of the Management accounts and commentary for the 10 months ended 31st January 2020 for both British Swimming Limited and World Class Programmes. The Head of Finance highlighted the forecasted full year operating deficit as £103k but outlined that this will hopefully be reduced to £75k through a reduction in the cancellation costs relating to the FINA Diving World Series. The Board were also informed that this would result in the reserves standing at £534k which is within the figures previously agreed by the Board.
- 34.2. The Board were advised that the Year 3 and Quarter 4 reports for World Class Programmes and Artistic Swimming's Aspiration Awards are due to be submitted by the end of April. Budgets for the Paris 2024 quadrennial cycle were submitted on the 28th February 2020 and feedback on these is expected by late April or early May.
- 34.3. The Board were informed that an audit planning meeting with Mazars took place in February 2020 and an Audit Planning Memorandum is to be provided to the ARC ahead of their next meeting in May. The Head of Finance updated the Board that the onsite audit, which is scheduled for June 2020, may need to be carried out remotely due to SportPark currently being closed due to Covid19.
- 34.4.1. The Head of Finance advised the Board that whilst the Risk Register should have come

to the April Board meeting an ARC meeting did not take place in March as planned due to the departure of Urvashi Dattani. The Board were informed that the SMT and Loughborough SMT have in the meantime been reviewing the Risk Register at each of their meetings. The next ARC will be arranged for May with a view to bring the updated Risk Register to the June Board meeting. The Head of Finance outlined that the main recent change to the Risk Register has been the addition of Covid-19.

- 34.4.2. A discussion took place with regards to the impact and mitigations being put in place in relation to this newly identified risk. The Board raised concerns with regards to the impact on athletes' mental health following the delay of the Olympic and Paralympic Games and sought clarification on whether the practices which have been put into place to support athletes during this difficult time are sufficient. The CEO informed the Board that each of the programmes have increased their health and well-being support during these difficult times and psychology support is being increased using a number of innovative methods and techniques. The Board requested for an update on this matter to be provided by the CEO in his Board report for the June 2020 Board meeting.
- 34.4.3. Keith Ashton raised the potential need for an interim ARC meeting to take place prior to the May meeting to analyse possible worst case scenarios given the impact of the Covid-19, including any impact on the funding position from UK Sport. The Board were in agreement that this would be beneficial. The Director of Business Operations to make the arrangements for both an interim ARC focussing on risk and the May ARC meeting.
- 34.5. The Board queried if any impact had yet been seen in terms of UK Sport funding. The CEO advised that no formal clarity on the funding situation had yet been received from UK Sport. In the meantime the CEO has advised the Performance Directors to be prudent with spend in the eventuality that UK Sport do claw back some funding moving forward. The Board requested for the CEO to send a note out to the Board to update them on this matter should confirmation on the funding situation be received from UK Sport prior to the next Board meeting.
- 34.6. The CEO advised the Board that he had been in contact with all partners since the outbreak of Covid-19 and assured the Board that there are no indications of any partnerships being broken as a result of the pandemic. With regards to the principle outfitting partner there will be delays in the provision of some kit orders but the impact of this will be minimal as there are currently no teams travelling.
- 34.7. 2020/2021 Budget**
- 34.7.1. The Head of Finance presented the 2020/2021 budget to the Board. The main headings of the presentation were:
- British Swimming 20/21 budget highlights
 - Operating statement summary
 - Income summary
 - Expenditure summary
 - Budget SLA charges from Swim England
 - Overall threats and opportunities
- 34.7.2. The Board queried what impact, if any, Covid-19 had had on the budget. The Head of Finance confirmed that this situation had not been considered in the budget so there may be savings moving forward as a result of the pandemic.
- 34.7.3. The Board sought clarification in terms of the options of either deferring some committed costs for future or trying to obtain refunds. The Board were informed that these options

are being explored on a case by case basis.

- 34.7.4. A query was raised with regards to the corporate governance budget. Board attendance at the Games will make it extremely difficult to balance this budget. This matter to be further discussed prior to the 2021 Games.
- 34.7.5. The CEO provided the Board with an update on both the British Swimming Championships and the British Para Swimming International Meet. Options are currently being explored for both of these events for 2021 with a view to finalising the plans within the next few weeks.
- 34.7.6. The Board were informed that a decision had been made at a recent Senior Management Team meeting to cancel the 2020 British Swimming Awards Dinner. The Board were in agreement this was a sensible decision.
- 34.7.7. A discussion took place with regards to the home country contributions to British Swimming should the current situation continue as this will likely have an impact on the commercial income for the home countries and in turn their ability to continue with the current level of contribution to British Swimming. The CEO's to continue to work closely together on this matter.
- 34.7.8. The Home Countries updated the Board on their latest situation with regards to potentially furloughing staff. The CEO informed the Board that British Swimming are awaiting clarification as to whether world class programme funded staff are eligible for furloughing and remains under constant review in relation to central employees.
- 34.7.9. The Board were asked to approve the 2020/2021 budget. The Board unanimously approved the budget but requested for an update to be brought to the June meeting as the budget is evolutionary due to so many current uncertainties. The Board were assured that if anything major develops prior to the June Board that they will be updated.

35. Chairman's Report

- 35.1. The Chairman highlighted the recent reports with regards to the developments of the International Swimming League (ISL). This matter to be discussed in more detail under strategic items.
- 35.2. The Chairman expressed that it is currently a difficult time in terms of international influence. An International Influence meeting is due to take place in the near future and the Chairman stressed the need to strike the right balance between doing what is best for the British Swimming athletes and coaches whilst remaining mindful of also doing the best for aquatics in general.
- 35.3. The Board were informed that the Remuneration Committee will, in light of the current situation, continue to review the provisional 1.5% salary increase which has been agreed for British Swimming staff. The Board to be kept updated.

36. Strategic Items

36.1. 2021/2022 Calendar

- 36.1.1. The CEO updated the Board on the fast moving developments in terms of LEN, FINA and ISL events following the announcement of the revised date for the Olympic Games. The CEO outlined the proposal British Swimming have put forward which they believe will have the least disruption on the international swimming cycle. A discussion took place. The CEO believes that decisions will be made over the next few weeks and the Board to be kept updated as the 2021/2022 calendar is finalised.

- 36.1.2. The Board discussed ISL. Whilst coaches are adapting the ISL to their benefit, the current view is that the ISL is not as attractive to the athletes due to alleged problems with the athletes not being paid. It was recognised that the current situation is also making the ISL very difficult to operate.
- 36.2. 2024 Strategy
- 36.2.1. The CEO updated the Board on the extensive work which had taken place on the UK Sport 2024 investment process. The Board recognised the amount of time and effort which had been invested in this process. Feedback from UK Sport is expected in May. The Board to be kept updated once feedback has been received.
- 36.2.2. The CEO provided the Board with a more detailed update on the organisational health. The Swimming in Britain work identified through this piece of work has been extremely well received by UK Sport and there may be a possibility of applying for additional funds for this innovative piece of work. The CEO feels British Swimming has positioned itself well for the next cycle of funding.
- 36.3. Covid-19
- 36.3.1. A further discussion took place on this matter especially the likely long lasting impact the pandemic could have on international events and travel, which is likely to significantly change the event industry. The Board felt it would be prudent to endeavour to find ways of sharing risks with other organisations moving forward.
- 36.3.2. A discussion took place regarding the opportunity whilst people are in isolation to generate creative content for aquatics fans. The Board were in agreement this is an opportunity to be a friendly support to fans during this difficult time. Consideration also to be given to creating content for when the Olympic and Paralympic Games would have taken place.
- 36.3.3. A discussion took place with regards to the potential for bringing athletes together in a more sterile environment should the isolation ruling be lifted. Some longer term planning is required to explore options for this at the appropriate time.
- 36.3.4. A question was raised with regards to insurance. The Director of Legal and Governance updated the Board that most insurance companies are currently in business recovery mode with insurance costs likely to escalate.
- 36.4. Current event update and future planning
- 36.4.1. Following on from earlier discussions regarding event planning the CEO outlined again his increasing focus on domestic events and his desire to work more creatively with domestic partners and other British sports. The Board again raised the importance of ensuring the right balance with international influence should British Swimming focus less on international events moving forward.
- 36.4.2. The CEO updated the Board on the movement within World Para Swimming to establish a new Governing body possibly based in the UK and linked to a university of which British Swimming would be a stakeholder and potentially service. World Para Swimming are working closely with UK Sport and the BPA on this project. Whilst the Board were supportive of this principle they felt it is important that this does not pose a distraction to the core business.
- 36.5.1. The Board were provided with a brief overview of the recent activity in terms of the potential new commercial partner and the events that led to the partnership not coming to fruition. This had been a significant opportunity for British Swimming to raise both commercial income and visibility of the sport. This item was included on the agenda to

help the Board to try and understand what could have been done differently which may have affected the outcome.

- 36.5.2. The CEO outlined that in his experience he had never got so close to contracting before a deal had fallen apart. This was extremely disappointing. The CEO of British Swimming and Swim England provided the Board with their assessment of the situation and a detailed discussion took place.
- 36.5.3. The Board felt there could be a benefit from dealing more directly with any future potential commercial partners moving forward if possible rather than through the agencies.
- 36.5.4. It was suggested that there may be some leverage in approaching the potential commercial partner again in light of the current situation. Consideration to be given to this over the coming weeks.
- 36.5.5. A detailed discussion took place on ensuring what rights are available to be offered to future potential commercial partners to provide real clarity of what is available. It was agreed that the correct forum to do this is through the CEO meetings and this forms a large part of the Swimming in Britain work. The meeting to be organised with David Carry, as earlier discussed, will be extremely helpful in progressing this.
- 36.5.6. A suggestion was made to devise a formula to agree the split between British Swimming and the home countries but following a discussion it was agreed that whilst a rough split could be agreed this may change depending on the partner. It was agreed that the most important aspect is agreeing the assets along with a set of parameters and principles and adapting to the commercial partner accordingly.
- 36.5.7. A discussion took place with regards to the role of the Board, CEO's, Commercial group and Sponsorship Approval Committee. The Board felt it would be useful to map out the interdependencies and how these various groups and committees function together and a clearer definition for each entity. The Board felt that if the Commercial group is a sub Committee to the Board that its only remit should be British Swimming. However, there is a strong appetite to all work together on a British approach and offering. The CEO to review the role and responsibility of the Commercial group, including the potential need for an independent member, and bring this to the June Board meeting.

37. Points arising from Executives reports

- 37.1. In light of the June Board meeting potentially not taking place in Scotland Scottish Swimming extended the invitation for British Swimming to host a joint meeting with Scottish Swimming on an alternative date.
- 37.2. Graeme Marchbank raised a question as to whether British Swimming have a business continuity plan in place for the key members of the Senior Management team (SMT). The CEO to discuss this with the Loughborough SMT at their next meeting.
- 37.3. Fergus Feeney queried whether British Swimming are facing any additional risks with anti-doping due to Covid-19. The Board were assured that good systems are in place to ensure athletes are aware of the risks and are still fulfilling their ADAMS requirements. However, testing out-of-competition has resulted as a result of Covid-19 and clearly there is no in-competition testing at the moment. This increased risk will also be highlighted in the risk register.
- 37.3. The Board were informed that following UKAD releasing their revised anti-doping rules expected in June the Director of Legal and Governance will bring the new British

Swimming anti-doping rules to the September Board meeting with the view for them being approved at the November AGM.

37.4. The Board queried what information, if any, the athletes have received should they become infected with Covid-19. The Board were assured that the performance teams are regularly sharing information with the athletes and this information is also being shared with the home countries. In addition weekly calls take place to ensure information is shared across sports and organisations.

37.5. The Board sought clarification on the latest status with regards to the BDO Governance audit and the expected delay to the Finance audit. The Director of Legal and Governance informed the Board that they are currently in business recovery mode due to Covid-19 but hopes, and has expressed this view to UK Sport, to bring the Governance aspect of the on-site audit to a conclusion within the next few weeks.

38. Board Liaison Updates

38.1. Swimming

38.1.1. Alex Kelham updated the Board on her attendance at the recent GBR1 event outlining how impressed she was with the level of detail which clearly goes into every aspect of the programme to ensure excellence. This was echoed by the second Board Liaison David Carry.

38.1.2. The Board Liaison outlined that after speaking to some of the athletes it is clear that their coaches are still working closely with them to encourage them to push the boundaries albeit in different ways. Sports Science and Sports Medicine staff are also sharing knowledge extremely well across the programme.

38.1.3. A query was raised with regards to any athletes who may be affected by their home coach being furloughed. The CEO advised the Board that all athletes on a programme have a plan in place and any potential issues are being dealt with. The Swimming PIG group are also driving this down through the programme and trying to provide support to athletes who require it within the home countries.

38.1.4. Alex Kelham updated that following a conversation with the National Performance Director they are confident that athletes are coping well with the current situation from a psychological point of view. They are aware where to go if they have a problem and are continuing with their daily monitoring which will help flag up where there may be an issue.

38.1.5. Alex Kelham raised a concern with the Board with regards to those athletes who were planning on retiring after the Olympic Games in 2020. These athletes clearly have a big decision ahead of them in terms of whether to continue for an extra year to try and compete at the Olympics in 2021.

38.2. Diving

38.2.1. Adele Stach-Kevitz updated the Board on a meeting she had had with the Performance Director and Head Coach prior to Covid-19 where all the indicators were there to expect great performances over the summer. There is a requirement to continue to focus on the female synchro pairs and the postponement of the Olympic Games offers an additional year to focus on this.

38.3. Para Swimming

38.3.1. Graeme Marchbank updated the Board that a planned call with the Performance Director had not taken place due to Covid-19. The CEO outlined that there may be more risks for the Para Swimming athletes in relation to Covid-19 due to their impairments.

38.4. Artistic Swimming

38.4.1. Jane Nickerson updated the Board that the athletes, like in other sports, are now all out of the water but are continuing to train on land and are focusing on their dance routines. The athletes are currently feeling positive. There is no clarity yet on the qualification process for Tokyo 2021.

38.5. Water Polo

38.5.1. Fergus Feeney updated the Board that a productive meeting had taken place in February with another meeting scheduled. Whilst no competition or travel activity is currently taking place the Home Country Water Polo management group is working through an action list and making good progress. The home nations are well represented and there is a new Chair in England. The Board Liaison informed the Board that including Water Polo in the 2024 UK Sport investment process had been well received by the Water Polo community. As with the other sports Water Polo are awaiting feedback from UK Sport.

38.6. High Diving

38.6.1. Keith Ashton informed the Board that the training camp the athletes were due to attend was cancelled due to Covid-19. Keith Ashton raised concerns with the athletes' ability to earn any income during this difficult time as their jobs have been impacted as a result. Keith Ashton and the CEO to explore if there are any resources which can be offered to the High Diving athletes in terms of protecting their welfare during this challenging period.

39. AOB

39.1. The Board queried whether there would be any impact on the recruitment for the new Athlete Representative position on the Board as a result of the delay of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. An update to be brought to the June meeting as originally planned.

39.2. A query was raised with regards to the payment of the Home Nation representatives. The Chairman informed the Board that this matter will be discussed and hopefully resolved by the Chairs at their next meeting.

39.3. The Swim England CEO informed the Board that their Chairman has temporarily stepped back from his Chairs position on the Swim England Board and the Deputy Chair is now acting as Chair.

39.4. The Board were informed that Scottish Swimming have advised their clubs not to hold their AGM's within the usual timescales and it is likely that Scottish Swimming will not hold their AGM in September.

39.5. Some members of the Board offered their assistance to the Board and Executives during this difficult period. This was well received.

40. Date of next meeting

40.1. The next meeting is due to take place on 5th-6th June in Scotland including a joint session with Scottish Swimming. The plans for this meeting to be reviewed over the coming weeks in light of developments in terms of Covid-19. The Board to be kept updated accordingly.