



Minutes subject to approval at the next British Swimming Board Meeting

BRITISH SWIMMING BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held on the 9th & 10th April 2021 via Zoom

Present:	Maurice Watkins (MW)	Chair
	Jack Buckner (JB)	CEO
	Alex Kelham (AK)	Swim England
	Keith Ashton (KA)	Swim England
	Jane Nickerson (JN)	Swim England
	Graeme Marchbank (GM)	Scottish Swimming
	Fergus Feeney (FF)	Swim Wales
	Adele Stach-Kevitz (AS)	Independent Member
	David Carry (DC)	Independent Member
	Corinne Cunningham (CC)	Independent Member
	Graham Edmunds (GE)	Athlete Representative
	Ash Cox (AC)	Director of Legal & Governance (DOLAG)
	Kathreen France (KF)	Head of Finance (HOF)
	Wendy Lockton (WL)	Director of Business Operations (DOBO)
	Chris Spice (CS)	Performance Director Swimming (Friday only)
	Byron Vaughan (BV)	Executive Officer (EO)
Apologies:	Peter Littlewood (PL)	Senior Independent Member

31. Welcome and Apologies

31.1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting which was taking place by Zoom due to the ongoing Covid-19 impact. Apologies were noted for Peter Littlewood.

32. UK Sport funding update – Jack Buckner

32.1.1 The CEO presented details to the Board an update on UK Sport Funding. The headings of the slides were:

- UK Sport – British Swimming
- The UK Sport Relationship
- Since we last met
- Looking Ahead
- Award Conditions
- In conclusion

32.1.2 The CEO updated the Board on the development of the UK Sport representations since the previous Board meeting confirming that representations made to UK Sport for Swimming, Artistic Swimming & Para Swimming had been unsuccessful. The

CEO informed the Board that Artistic Swimming & Water Polo have been granted UK Sport National Squad Funding.

- 32.1.3. CS commented how disappointed, although not surprised, all were with the outcome of the UK Sport Representation decision as they felt a strong case had been provided.
- 32.1.4. The CEO updated the Board on the new UK Sport award conditions and a discussion took place on Co-funding. CS provided the Board with some examples of how the talent pathway within the Swimming programme has helped to ensure that there is talent coming through the system. The CEO outlined the excellent work, which had taken place on Organisational Health as part of the submission, where it was felt that the excellent collaborative working between British Swimming and the Home Nations was clearly highlighted. In addition to this, some excellent work has taken place on the Aquatics across Britain strategy, which the CEO's are starting work on again. The CEO advised that British Swimming will work collectively with the Home Nations CEO's with a view to further discussing this matter with UK Sport to demonstrate the excellent partnership work and co-funding in place with the Home Nations. The Board felt it would be beneficial to get further feedback from UK Sport in terms of where they think this area could be improved.
- 32.1.5. DC questioned what UK Sport are basing their decisions on if not considering performance. CS advised that there appears to be a shift from a focus on achieving medals to involving wider sports. CS advised how the Performance Director cohort are concerned that a shift away from performance in the UK Sport Strategy will result in Team GB slipping down the medal table.
- 32.1.6. A discussion took place on the impact of potentially having medallists from Tokyo who cannot be funded for the Paris cycle as a result of the change in the investment model. KA asked about mitigation for athletes to be funded. CS advised the APA is less or none existent.
- 32.1.7. KA raised the concern if there is a risk of athletes changing nationality if British Swimming cannot provide funding opportunities to them. The CEO advised that a risk of this is that it could make college or off shore training centre more attractive to athletes. CS raised concerns that if athletes choose to train off shore then this leads to less control over the athletes and also less quality coaches working with the athletes.
- 32.1.8. AS questioned what the impact is on the talent pool for the future. CS advised that the funding without doubt has an impact and in addition to this there are significant challenges due to the pandemic as talent athletes have lost 2 years of competition.

33. 2021-2022 BS Budget presentation – Kathreen France

- 33.1.1 The HOF presented to the Board the Draft British Swimming Budget. Year Ended 31st March 2022(Excl WCP). The titles of the slides were:
- British Swimming 21/22 Budget Highlights
 - Operating Statement Summary
 - Income summary
 - World Class Contributions
 - Expenditure summary
 - Budgeted SLA Charges from Swim England
 - Overall Threats and Opportunities
- 33.1.2. KF highlighted the main variances and confirmed that the year-end figure ensures the minimum reserves figure.
- 33.1.3. AK queried whether there needs to be a contingency for legal costs within the budget and this matter was discussed.
- 33.1.4. GM queried the commission agreement in line with the current kit contract. The CEO provided the Board with an update on the current position with the kit partner. The HOF outlined that as there will be no cash for 2021 and no commission, other than on VIK kit taken, which will be paid as commission. . CEO updated the Board that we will not be using an agency for any kit tender and this will be managed internally. The outcome of the tender will depend on the market but the CEO remains cautiously optimistic.
- 33.1.5. KA queried if British Swimming are utilising the Government Job retention scheme and a discussion took place. The CEO updated the Board that the organisation is currently working at capacity and at the time of the meeting there is no clarity on summer events and the staffing required. JN outlined that the rules on the job retention scheme have changed, which makes it harder to put people on and off the scheme. The CEO advised that this situation will be monitored moving forward to ensure the scheme is utilised where possible in line with work demands.
- 33.2.1 The HOF presented to the Board the British Swimming World Class Programmes Draft Budget for Year Ended 31st March 2022. The titles of the slides were:
- BS WCP Budget Highlights
 - BS WCP Cycle Funding Comparison
 - BS WCP Contracted Budget Submission 2021/22
 - BS WCP Operating Statement Summary
 - Swimming Expenditure
 - Diving Expenditure
 - Para Swimming Expenditure
 - WCP Budget Risks and Opportunities
- 33.2.2. The HOF detailed that the budgets have been submitted to UK Sport but it may still change as work is still to be done on the Swimming & Para Swimming budgets.

- 33.2.3. GM raised a query with regards to the apparent reduced funding being put towards people development and if this could potentially risk losing key members of the team. KF advised that the reduced budget in this area is mainly due to a performance staff member departing and this position being vacant for a period of time. This position will be looked at post Tokyo. The CEO added that there is certainly a risk of losing key members of staff as there is inevitably people movement after any Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- 33.2.4. CC stressed how difficult it is to compare 2020 with other years as 2020 was an unusual year due to the pandemic.
- 33.2.5. The CEO provided the Board with an update on the UK Sport Funding for Artistic Swimming & Water Polo and outlined the discussions which had taken place earlier in the day between the CEO's with regards to managing the funding for these two sports.
34. The meeting continued on Saturday morning.
35. **Declaration of Interest**
- 35.1. *None recorded at this stage of the meeting.*
36. **Minutes of the meeting held 5th – 6th February 2021**
- 36.1. The Minutes were agreed as a correct record of the February 2021 meeting.
37. **Matters Arising from the minutes of the meeting held 5th – 6th February 2021**
- 37.1.1. 21.1. – The Chair confirmed the Minutes were updated as discussed and the amended version of the Minutes have been circulated to the Board.
- 37.1.2. 22.1.4. – The Chairman updated that a meeting with the IT department had been held which was attended by members of the ARC, the CEO and JN in relation to Cyber Security Insurance. The meeting was positive and a number of actions were agreed during the discussion.
- 37.1.3. 22.1.5. – The Chairman confirmed that JN has now provided an update on membership figures.
- 37.1.4. 22.1.7. – The Chair updated the Board on the situation with regards to PL and outlined PL hopes to be able to attend the June 2021 meeting. The Chairman recommended that should PL not be able to attend the June 2021 meeting that a further review of the situation would take place at that stage. The Board were happy with this recommendation. FF raised a query with regards to the nominations committee. It was agreed that the Chairman would arrange a meeting with the Nominations Committee prior to the June 2021 Board meeting to discuss this matter.

- 37.1.5. 22.1.12. – The DOLOG had circulated to the Board the updated Governance plan which included an overview of the changes.
- 37.1.6. 24.3.3 – The Board were informed that the matter of child safeguarding risk, and suggested a potential name change for the risk. This will be on the agenda for the May 2021 ARC Meeting.
- 37.1.7. 25.3. – The DOLOAG provided an update to the Board on the confidential matter previously discussed.
- 37.1.8. 26.1.6. – The CEO updated the Board that the Olympic and Paralympic Games are going ahead and sports continue their preparations. The CEO updated on the good work which is taking place with the BOA and BPA whilst acknowledging there are still risks involved. Without doubt the Games Experience will be very different. The CEO confirmed that in line with no international spectators being able to attend the Games non-essential personnel will not be attending. The teams are preparing to compete under these circumstances. The CEO updated that plans are also being discussed to explore what can be delivered back in the UK for family and friends whilst the Games are on. The Board expressed a desire to be kept abreast of the development within the teams as they prepare for the Games and it was agreed that the best mechanism for ensuring this was to set up a Board WhatsApp group to allow the CEO to keep the Board updated on all key matters.
- 37.1.9. 26.2.3. – The Chairman informed the Board that the CEO continues to explore the scope to further develop British Swimming commercially. This will continue to be on the agenda for the commercial group.
- 37.1.10. 26.4.3. – The Chairman outlined that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion remains in the Board agenda with AS & JN providing an update later in the agenda.
- 37.1.11. 28.6.4. – The Chairman updated that the CEO continues to review all social media channels while acknowledging at the same time the limited resources to do so. It remains a constant balancing act between growing current channels and exploring new channels. The CEO will keep discussing this matter with the commercial group.
- 37.1.12. 29.3. – The HOF presented to the Board the 2021-2022 Budgets on the Friday evening.
- 37.1.13. 30.1 – Unfortunately due to the ongoing restrictions due to Covid-19 plans to host the meeting in Sheffield had to change and the meeting has been held via Zoom.
- 38. Finance, Audit & Risk**
- 38.1. Head of Finance Report**
- 38.1.1. The HOF provided the Board with an overview of the 10 month management accounts to the 31st January 2021 and explained the variances within the figures.

- 38.1.2 GM queried how the adjustment to the Swim England contributions will be reflected moving forward. The HOF advised that these figures will be updated and included in the forecast and changes will be highlighted in the summary. JN highlighted that the contribution from Swim England is based on both trading income and membership and that the contribution will be more likely affected by trading income from this point forward.
- 38.1.3. CC proposed the Board have a session on a Friday evening at a forthcoming Board meeting following the Olympic and Paralympic Games to further discuss the 4 year forecast. The CEO felt it was sensible to have this session at the November 2021 Board meeting.
- 38.1.4. AS queried until when key personnel were secured in contracts. The CEO advised that not retaining key individuals is always a risk following an Olympic and Paralympic Games but this matter is being managed by individual managers.
- 38.1.5. The HOF clarified that the World Class budgets for the next 4 year cycle have been submitted to UK Sport. The HOF outlined that there is considerable underspend in the WC Programmes but UK Sport have agreed some flexibility in terms of carry forward.
- 38.1.6. GE & GM raised a query with regards to people development expenditure. The HOF provided clarity to the Board on this matter outlining that significant savings had been made in this area on venue hire costs as any people development which had taken place had done so remotely.
- 38.1.7. A discussion took place with on the agreed organisational reserves. The CEO advised that the organisation is running lean with roles and it remains a balancing act to protect the agreed reserves level whilst ensuring the organisation has the staffing levels to deal with the capacity of the work. The CEO stressed that a decision had been made to not go below the agreed reserves level but this did mean there was limited capacity to chase further commercial income.
- 38.1.8. The Board were asked if they were happy to approve the 2021/2022 budgets. The Board unanimously confirmed they were happy to approve the budgets.

39.0 Chairman's Report

- 39.1. The Chairman outlined again the intention to have a meeting with the Nominations Committee to further discuss PL and the role of the Senior Independent Director.
- 39.2. The Chair updated the Board that the Home Nation Chairs had confirmed that they were happy to sign the MoU, a positive outcome without the need for any mediation. The Chairman thanked the Home Nations for their continued collaborative working. FF queried if UK Sport could receive a copy of this as an example of excellent collaborative work.

- 39.3. The Chairman updated the Board on discussions which had taken place at the September 2020 and April 2021 Chairs meetings in relation to payment for non-remunerated Board members. The Chairman outlined that the Swim England Chairman will be taking this matter to the Swim England Board and will report back once this has been overtaken. Swim England have some regulatory issues which need to be addressed in relation to the possibility of covering these costs. At this point in the meeting GM declared an interest in this matter. The HOF queried if these costs need to be added to the British Swimming budget. Further discussion on this matter to take place once it has been addressed by the Swim England Board.

40. Strategic Issues

40.1 Covid-19

- 40.1.1. The CEO updated the Board on the current Covid-19 situation. The CEO advised that the weekly Tuesday Covid-19 calls continue to work well for sharing information as domestic events in the UK are held and as teams prepare to travel overseas. The CEO commented how great it is to be able to stage events once again and highlighted that the partnerships are working well.

40.2. 2024 Strategy

- 40.2.1. This matter had been comprehensively discussed at the Friday evening Board session.

40.3. Aquatics in Britain

- 40.3.1. The CEO updated that work in this area over the last year has been limited as there has been a need to focus on operational matters due to the challenges presented by Covid-19. However, it was agreed at the recent Home Country Partnership meeting that work on the Aquatics in Britain will start again with a meeting organised for August 2021. This item will remain on future agendas.

40.4. BAME & Equality

- 40.4.1 AS provided the Board with an update on the work which had been undertaken in this area since the last meeting. AS had circulated a paper in advance of the meeting for the Board's reflection.
- 40.4.2. It was agreed that this matter should remain on the agenda under Equality, Diversity & Inclusion. BAME should be removed.
- 40.4.3. A discussion took place on the importance of clarifying the role of the executives, home nations and the British Swimming Board. It was agreed that the primary role of the British Swimming Board is to bring role models to increase EDI across all groups. It was recognised that this can be particularly powerful in terms of empowerment.
- 40.4.4. It was agreed that a major factor to consider is that the same terminology is used across all of the home nations.

- 40.4.6. A detailed discussion took place on this matter and the Board were in agreement that specific actions need to be identified in order for this important area of work to be progressed. It was agreed that the Chairman and the CEO would discuss the next steps in order to move this forward. It was also agreed that the CEO would explore what other NGB's and UK Sport are doing in this area with a view to adapt their frameworks for potential use within British Swimming and the Home Nations.
- 40.4.7 AK has offered the services of Lewis Silkin on this matter. AK was thanked for this offer.
- 40.5. Governance – Managing Board Terms of Reference
- 40.5.1 The DOLOG had circulated in advance of the meeting the Managing Board Terms of Reference. The DOLAG highlighted that this document is required under the Code (“Sports Governance Code”) principally to enshrine the Managing Board as the organisations decision making body. The Board were invited to discuss the terms of reference. CC suggested that sub committees should be advisory leaving all decisions to the Board, which is reflected. AK suggested that the terms of reference should explicitly reflect the ability for the Board to ask for information from Executives. GM suggested that child safeguarding should be added to the policies reviewed by the Board. It was agreed that the DOLAG would make these amendments and recirculate where the document will be taken as approved.
- 40.6 Points arising from Executive Reports
- 40.6.1 The DOLAG updated the Board on a confidential matter and a discussion took place. The DOLAG to keep the Board updated as this matter progresses.
- 40.6.2. The CEO provided the Board with an update on the latest situation with regards to the kit sponsor. The CEO updated the Board on the plan to tender for a new kit provider, outlining the excellent collaborative work which has taken place with the home nations to prepare a joint presentation deck to take to tender. The CEO updated the Board on the legal position with the sports marketing agency previously used and outlined that moving forward the new tender process will be managed internally.
- 40.6.3. A detailed discussion took place on this matter. GM queried if the intention is to widen the tender to not just swimwear manufacturers. The CEO outlined that whilst it is imperative the technical kit is correct a discussion on this matter had taken place and the intention was to approach non swimwear manufacturers also. The CEO advised that flexibility around rights will be central to all discussions with potential new partners. It was agreed that any contacts the Board may have would be welcomed.
- 40.6.4. The CEO updated the Board on the latest situation with GB Sports Media, a subscription based platform that is driven by NGB's. The intention is that this will cover all British Swimming events. The CEO advised that the provisional launch

date for the platform is 1st October 2021. The CEO to keep the Commercial Group, the Home Nations and the Board updated on this exciting project as it develops. The Board queried if this initiative will preclude British Swimming from creating new content, like the proposed documentary pre-Covid. The CEO outlined that this will provide a platform to create new content and it will be exciting to see how the project develops.

41. Items for Decision

41.1. The Board had received a copy of the ARC Terms of Reference in advance of the meeting and were asked to approve these. The Board were happy to approve the ARC Terms of Reference.

41.2. The DOLAG updated the Board on a matter currently subject to legal proceedings. Governance is being put in place to ensure the correct expenditure of the budget.

42. Board Liaison Updates

42.1 Swimming

42.1.1 DC outlined how the squad is in a good place with moral high following recent competitive events taking place. There is a desire to travel for overseas camps but DC outlined that the risk is being monitored before any decisions are made.

42.1.2 DC commented on how there has been positive results from the UK Sport Cultural Health Check.

42.1.3. DC attended the virtual GBR1 and commented how impressive it was to see how athletes and coaches have turned challenge and adversity into positivity with really good leadership being shown to allow coaches and athletes to focus on their roles.

42.1.4. DC expressed concern about the impact on the younger pathway athletes who, due to the pandemic restrictions, have been out of the water for a year.

42.1.5. DC advised that the Olympics are the main focus and how there is excitement within the squad for the Games.

42.2 Diving

42.2.1 AS updated the Board on the Virtual event/challenge that was recently held between GB & Canada which covered all dives including synchro dives. The virtual meet was held across 3 centres, 2 in the UK (LAC & Edinburgh) and Canada. The athletes where all excited to compete and feel the adrenaline of an event. AS thanked all involved in the organisation of this event.

42.2.2. AS updated that the FINA Diving World Cup is taking place in Tokyo at the beginning of May providing an opportunity to qualify the outstanding 3 Olympic spots for the Games.

- 42.2.3. AS outlined to the Board the importance of Warm Weather Training camp opportunities for the team in preparation for the Olympics.
- 42.2.4. CC updated how she was able to visit the LAC for the Virtual event and outlined the pressure that the team were under from an event delivery point of view due to technology. Germany & USA was also invited to attend the Virtual event but were unfortunately unable to participate remotely due to Covid-19 and technology restrictions. CC reiterated how high the morale is within the team.
- 42.3. Para Swimming
- 42.3.1. GE highlighted the excellent progression in athlete's time from the heats to finals at the recent BPSIM event in Sheffield.
- 42.3.2. GE detailed how the aspiration is to have all British Swimming athlete classification completed in Madeira at the IPC World Para Swimming European Championships and the World Series event in Berlin. The concern is that other Federations may not be classified until they arrive in Tokyo for the Paralympic Games. This could result in British athletes racing against athletes who they are not expecting to race due to those athletes being reclassified in Tokyo just prior to the Games. The CEO reiterated British Swimming is confident that all British athletes will be reclassified ahead of the Games.
- 42.4. Artistic Swimming
- 42.4.1 JN advised the Board how the Duet is looking good and will be entering the Solo event at the LEN European Aquatic Championships in May. The team is well prepared but due to Covid-19 there has been limited training opportunities.
- 42.4.2. JN advised how Artistic Swimming are still awaiting on news from FINA with regards to the Artistic Swimming Olympic Qualification event.
- 42.4.3. JN outlined how the team are optimistic that travel will be possible later in the year for camps.
- 42.4.4. JN advised the Board that the feeling on the whole within the team is positive and fully focused on the Olympics despite being disappointed about the recent news on funding
- 42.5. Water Polo
- 42.5.1 FF updated the Board on the UK Sport Funding. The decision by UK Sport to award Water Polo with progression funding has given the Water Polo Community a real boost and work will now take place to work on a strategy to get the funding to the right areas efficiently.

42.5.2. FF commented how, for a number of years, Water Polo have been heavily reliant on volunteers with clubs & players predominantly from England rather than Wales or Scotland.

42.6. High Diving

42.6.1 KA outlined how there are still no High Diving events taking place.

42.6.2. KA detailed how High Diving is the only unfunded discipline. The CEO & KA have met to discuss the High Diving strategy and how as an organisation this can be achieved. The CEO added that the NPD has included some High Diving objectives in the Diving Paris strategy.

42.7. Masters

42.7.1. The CEO advised that the LEN European Masters Championships in Budapest due to take place at the end of May have been cancelled.

48. AOB

48.1. Discussion took place regarding the opportunity for Board to attend the British Swimming Selection event in London. The CEO outlined that due to strict Covid-19 protocols no Board members will be able to attend unfortunately. The CEO spoke of his experiences of attending events in Manchester recently that operated under strict protocols to create an event bubble.

48.2. The CEO provided an update to the Board on International Influence matters which included the New President for FINA. The CEO advised the FINA Congress is due to take place in Doha in June 2021. The CEO outlined how he hopes to see more engagement and diverse representation within FINA as FINA look for a change in direction on Governance and how they operate in the future.

48.3. GM spoke about Rule 50 protests at Trials and Olympics. The CEO to provide an update at the June Board meeting on the position of British Swimming after discussions with BOA & BPA.

49. Date of Next Meeting

49.1. The next meeting is to take place 11th – 12th June 2021. The DOBO to look into possible venues for the June Board meeting to be held in person.