

AQUATICS GB BOARD

MINUTES

FROM THE MEETING HELD 16TH NOVEMBER 2024 AT THE LONDON STADIUM, LONDON, E20 2ST

ATTENDEES:

Karen Webb Moss (KWM)	Chair
Drew Barrand (DB)	CEO
Corinne Cunningham (CC)	Senior Independent Director
Caroline Green (CG)	Swim England – Home Nation Nominated Director <i>[virtual]</i>
Keith Ashton (KA)	Swim England – Home Nation Nominated Director
Jane Nickerson (JMN)	Swim England - Home Nation Nominated Director
Graeme Marchbank (GM)	Scottish Swimming – Home Nation Nominated Director
Fergus Feeney (FF)	Swim Wales – Home Nation Nominated Director and
David Carry (DC)	Independent Member <i>[virtual]</i>
Piers Martin (PM)	Independent Member
Nili Safavi (NS)	Independent Member
Aimee Booker (AB)	Athlete Representative
Kathreen France (KF)	Director of Finance <i>[item 42.1, 42.2 and 42.3 only]</i>
Rob Henderson (RMH)	Business Operations Coordinator

MINUTES:

40. Welcome and Apologies

- 40.1 KWM welcomed the Board Directors, with all in attendance. Special thanks were given to the Board for the time taken to attend the Aquatics GB Conference, Board Meeting and Awards over the course of the weekend.
- 40.2 Further gratitude goes on record to departing Directors - KA and JMN - for their dedication over the duration of their tenure. KWM paid tribute to each individually, noting the wisdom and support given throughout.

41. Declarations of Interest

None in addition to those already declared.

42. Finance and Commercial Update

- 42.1 Commentary for the accounts ended 30.09.24 and Finance BAU report
- 42.1.1 KF joined the meeting. The forecast presentation has been changed to reflect zero guaranteed commercial income at this point. The Corporate figure shows a negative position, relative to the budget, of £150k for the year to date.
- 42.1.2 Lebara has confirmed that they will not renew their contract due to change in their sponsorship strategy.

- 42.1.3 DB confirmed that the organisation is still on budget thanks to the identification and reduction of smaller supply contracts. The intention is to rebuild the reserves over the next financial year.
- 42.1.4 The World Class Programme figures are showing a favourable variance on the Year-to-Date budget of £621k. The majority of this is unpaid Olympic and Paralympic Games costs, but an underspend is still expected. This surplus will be used to pay forwards some future Performance Centre costs.
- 42.1.5 KF updated on the proposed Government increase to Employer's National insurance costs. These are estimated to be £22k additional for Corporate and £56k additional for Performance.
- 42.1.6 It was noted that we may be impacted by further knock-on effects from suppliers and providers.
- 42.1.7 DB reported that UK Sport has asked Universities to collaborate on standardised pricing for funded sports. This will likely result in price increases.
- 42.1.8 The 25/26 budget is currently under development although much is reliant on the UK Sport funding announcement.
- 42.1.9 Following a query from JMN, DB clarified that UK Sport would not consider supporting the corporate side of the business, as the traditional NGB structure includes a membership model that allows for income.
- 42.1.10 The Finance BAU report was taken as read.
- 42.2 Minutes of Audit and Risk Committee meeting held 25th October 2024
- 42.2.1 The Minutes were taken as read and CC gave a short update. The meeting was focused on the Cost Control proposal as well as ensuring the Account Forecast and Commentary were fully accurate as we move towards reporting.
- 42.2.2 DB updated that the Home Nation contributions are contracted to be maintained at current levels.
- 42.2.3 There was discussion on the Conflict of Interest arising involving Home Nation Nominated Directors during any discussion of the Memoranda of Understanding with Aquatics GB. This was noted as is the requirement to be quorate. It was agreed that to avoid this conflict, there will be a requirement to keep Home Nation Memorandum of Understanding conversations at CEO and Chair level.
- 42.2.4 GM noted that the Risk Register requires some attention regarding outdated risks. DB agreed, observing that the focus has been on prioritising active risks.
- 42.2.5 **Action: DB to ensure Risk Register is fully relevant to the current organisational position.**
- 42.3 Cost control proposal
- 42.3.1 DB gave an overview of the proposal:
- 42.3.2 Focus Area 1 – 24/25 budget – changes to be implemented by Jan 1, 2025
Focus Area 2 – 25/26 budget – changes to be implemented by Apr 1, 2025
Focus Area 3 – Staffing: Capabilities and Costs - review complete by Jan 1, 2025
- 42.3.3 The World Class Programme has agreed to contribute an additional £120k given the impact uplevelled Championships had on performance in Paris.

- 42.3.4 DB noted the removal of smaller contracted suppliers, resulting in a saving of £20k. In addition, there is a recruitment freeze for the corporate side of the organisation.
- 42.3.5 Moving forwards, the events financial model will move towards a break-even position. Events downsizing, although not preferred, will be considered.
- 42.3.6 DB stated the preferred method of achieving this model is through commercial income. To this end, DB is meeting with broadcasters in next two weeks to seek contribution towards production costs.
- 42.3.7 CC reported that ARC believe an IT provision market analysis would be of benefit to the organisation to ascertain best value. It was noted that any change in provision would impact the current supplier and Aquatics GB should be sensitive to this.
- 42.3.8 DB stated that there is a value in having the Loughborough office and this agreement currently represents excellent value in the market.
- 42.4 Sales pipeline update
DB expects negotiations with the nutrition partner to become exclusive in the coming weeks. There are several leads that continue to be explored, ranging in budget.
- 42.4.1 There was some discussion on Value in Kind agreements and it was noted that a number of these already exist with key suppliers, particularly on the Performance side of the business.
- 42.4.2 DB will start selling specific sets of marketing rights for the Aquatics GB Swimming Championships from the end of November. FF noted a small opportunity for Sport Passport to purchase some basic AGB Swimming Championships marketing rights at the lower price end.
- 42.4.3 A range of diverse income streams was discussed; including donor programmes, charitable donations and philanthropy.
- 42.4.4 At the Chair's request, the Executive left the meeting, and the Board Directors continued with a private discussion that included DB.
- 43. Governance, Minutes and Matters Arising**
- 43.1 Minutes of the Board meeting held 14th September 2024
- 43.1.1 The Minutes were approved and accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
- 43.1.2 KA requested a technical debrief from the Performance team; this has historically happened within two meetings of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- 43.1.3 **Action: Performance team to deliver a form of technical debrief to the Board.**
- 43.2 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 14th September 2024
The Minutes were approved and accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
- 43.3 Actions Arising from previous Meeting Minutes
Progress was noted in all outstanding areas. KWM requested some clarity on World Class Programme budget phasing at the February Board meeting.
- 43.4 Update from the Remuneration Committee meeting held 16th October 2024
DB updated that the planned salary increase for staff will not go ahead owing to the current financial situation.

44. CEO's Report

44.1 Commercial

The Commercial BAU Report was taken as read.

44.2 Performance

44.2.1 The Performance BAU Report was taken as read.

44.2.2 DB clarified that following the additional funding announcement from the Government, Aquatics GB can attempt to request further funding in addition to what has already been indicated by UK Sport.

44.3 Business Operations

The Business Operations BAU Report was taken as read.

44.4 Principles and Policies

44.4.1 The Principles and Policies BAU Report was taken as read.

44.4.2 DB stated that there is no intention to create new confidential reporting channels for internal instances of sexual harassment following new laws in this area; current channels will be updated and utilised for this purpose.

44.4.3 The Culture and Welfare status update was reviewed for the first time. GM stated that the RAG rating should indicate green if on target, rather than green if completed.

44.4.4 **Action: Update Culture and Welfare status RAG rating to indicate green when 'on target'.**

44.5 Stakeholder Relations

The Stakeholder Relations BAU Report was taken as read.

45. Chair's Report

45.1 As a result of the departure of JMN and KA, two new members have been nominated by Swim England to join the Board. These will be: Joan Wheeler and Sara Todd.

45.2 Joan currently sits on the Swim England Board and is Chair of the Sport Operations Committee. Sara is Chair of the South East Region.

45.3 KWM will be meeting with each and is pleased to welcome them to the Board. They will be formally introduced and announced prior to their first meeting in February 2025.

45.4 The Board Skills Matrix will need to be updated. Board Director appraisals need to be arranged within twelve months of the previous meetings, these will be organised in the coming months.

45.5 KWM has reviewed the scoring against the agreed Board behaviours from the September meeting in Cardiff and this will form the baseline of some discussion at the appraisals.

45.6 It was announced that Aquatics GB will be a Board Apprentice Host Board for 2025, with an Apprentice appointed before the end of 2024.

45.7 KWM, DB and Performance team have attended several debriefs post-Paris, including with the British Olympic Association, and we have had the opportunity like all NGBs to give our feedback..

- 45.8 There will be a new BOA Chair as Sir Hugh Robertson has reached the end of his term. The final two nominees are current Vice Chair Annemarie Phelps and the current UK Sport Chair Katherine Grainger. Both candidates have reached out to all NGBs so KWM and DB will meet with both before votes are cast.
- 45.9 KWM asked for Board Director thoughts prior to the vote on 28th November 2024.
- 45.10 **Action: RMH to share the post Paris 2024 congratulatory notes from UK Sport and British Paralympic Association.**
- 45.11 **Action: KWM and DB to send letter to Home Nations to thank them for their efforts across 2024.**
- 45.12 KWM attended European Aquatics congress in Belfast and spoke on a DEI panel. The Congress focused on approvals of annual report and financials.
46. **AOB**
None.
47. **Date of next meeting**
31st January / 1st February 2025 – Hyatt Regency, Manchester