

## Minutes of the SESWR Water Polo Technical Committee Meeting, held via Zoom on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020, starting at 7.00pm.

### Present:

Roger Downing, SESWR President (RD)  
Chrissie Robinson, Regional Chair (CR)  
Andy Smart, Board Representative (AS)  
Gerry Griffin, Regional Finance Officer (GG)  
Stuart Noyce, WPTC Chair & Finance Officer (SN)  
Mike Coles, WPTC Secretary, Development & Officials Coordinator (MC)  
Martyn Thomas, WPTC Specialist (MT)  
Simon Tomlinson, SESWR Female Chief Coach (ST)  
John Spicer, SESWR Male Chief Coach & Gloucestershire Representative (JS)  
Brian Steer, Devon Representative (BS)  
Chris Pryke, Dorset Representative (CP)  
Bradley Poole, Somerset Representative (BP)  
Helen & Andrew Hicks, Wiltshire Representatives (HAW)  
Phil Whiting, BWWPL Representative (PW)

### 1. Apologies & Introductions

- 1.1. Apologies from Anthony Stevenson, Cornwall Representative (*post meeting note: failed to receive login details and noted by MC that email sent at 7.00 pm, but not spotted*).
- 1.2. Introduction of all those present was given for the benefit of the new Regional Board representative.

### 2. Approval of the minutes from the meeting held via Zoom on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020

- 2.1. Approval proposed by MT, seconded by PW

### 3. Matters Arising but not on agenda

- 3.1. No matters arising.

### 4. Notice of any other business

- 4.1. Further information on Guidance to return to training, regarding the 15 number on under-18s raised by BS.

### 5. Updates from Groups

- 5.1. *Swim England Leadership Group*: MC informed the meeting that they had not had a formal meeting since the previous one reported at the July meeting, other than the Return to Training Meetings held on 1<sup>st</sup> October, and another scheduled for the 6<sup>th</sup> October. The majority of this was covered by the Coaches Forum held on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 (Appendix I).
  - 5.1.1. ST raised the situation of Protocols on Under-18s. SN said that from the Thursday meeting he understood that there could be training matches, but formal matches could not be held. He understood this was the present situation. ST said that he had already received notifications for teams to visit Taunton for training matches. MT said he understood it was all down to the providers of the pool, and what they wished. MC understood that we as a committee would need to appoint a Covid Lead. This was supported by CR. ST asked if it needed to be an independent

person. MC said that it did not. MC volunteered to take on the position. SN said he was happy to support MC if this was the case.

- 5.2. *Swim England Competition Calendar*: SN said he had not heard anything, and CR confirmed this. She went on to say everything was very fluid at the moment.
- 5.3. *Swim England South West Management Board*: RD said that this was just a general review, but CR informed the meeting that a lot of the information that was discussed at the board was confidential and therefore had only gone out to board members.
- 5.4. There was nothing discussed that was water polo specific, but the region was carrying on with the various courses being held, such as Safeguarding, Team Manager Training, etc. All budgets were presently suspended, and although budgets were on the agenda for this meeting, no budget would be considered until February 2021 at the earliest.
- 5.5. SN asked what the present financial position of the region was, to which CR replied that they would be approximately £10,000 deficit on the year. SN then asked what the current reserves were, to which CR replied £300,000 at the beginning of the year.
- 5.6. SN then asked what were the required amount needed to be kept for contingencies? RD replied that £300,000 was the target for reserves. The only amount that has come in is the furlough monies from the Government. There were still major outgoings for the region.
- 5.7. RD also raised the subject of Stronger Affiliation, in particular the clubs who had yet to engage with the Stronger Affiliation Co-ordinator, Jackie Hilliard. MC replied that he was aware of two clubs who had yet to engage, University of Bath Water Polo and Newquay Water Polo.
- 5.8. University of Bath had a problem in that being students, there was a continued churn of volunteers. Also, the coach, Tony Murphy, does not have any coaching qualifications. This could be overcome by the fact that Tom Hunt, formerly of Cheltenham, has a Level 1 Assistant Teacher qualification. MC would relay this information to Jackie Hilliard.
- 5.9. Newquay was more of a problem as they were refusing to engage with either MC or Jackie. We now have new contact details which again will be passed on to Jackie. RD mentioned that there was a problem with their constitution as well, and MC said he would pass on their details to the region.

## **6. Covid-19 Update**

- 6.1. Feedback from SE Leadership Group Q&A. This was covered under previous items.
- 6.2. Effects on Swim England South West. Again, this was covered under previous items.

## **7. Update on Inter-Regional Competitions**

- 7.1. Under-18s Boys and Girls February 2021. SN informed the meeting that this likely to be moved to the second half of 2021 and will be included in the new competition calendar which is due out soon. It had been hoped that all Inter-Regional Competitions would be taken into Swim England management, but following the pandemic, it has been decided that all of these competitions will be continue to be run by volunteers.
- 7.2. Under-16s Boys and Girls, June/July 2021. See above.
- 7.3. Under-14s Boys and Girls, December 2021. See above.

## **8. 2021 Swim England South West Region Inter-County Championships**

- 8.1. Proposed to book Millfield for 30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021.
- 8.2. SN put forward a proposal, saying that he had yet to book the pool for this event, following on from the instructions from CR as regards restraints on the budget. Having looked at the costs of putting on this event which cost the region about £230 if the charges proposed in the budget are accepted. Millfield now say that in new conditions that hirers would be responsible for 15% of the hire charge if the pool is cancelled prior to the event. The pool costs about £3,500 for the event, so 15% of that is £450. SN proposed that this £450 cost be divided equally between the six counties who participate in the competition, working out at approximately £75 per county. County reps were asked to go back to their counties, for whom the competition is run, to see if they would be happy to support this proposal, so that there is no risk to the region if the event cannot take place. In principle all the representatives were in favour, but they would ask their treasurers. GG spoke that he was not against this proposal. MC would email each

county rep regarding this proposal.

## **9. SESWR Regional Academy**

9.1. It was proposed that Item 10 would be taken first as dependent on that item.

## **10. Finance Report and Budgets**

- 10.1. SN firstly apologies on an error where a formula in the spread sheet had been copied incorrectly, and therefore the item regarding South West Championships costs would be reduced to £230 in the summary.
- 10.2. SN went on to say that he had considerably reduced the budget in many areas due to Covid. He proposed that going forward, all water polo committee meetings would be via Zoom which would reduce the budget by £1,200.
- 10.3. An increase in entry charge from £120 to £125 for Inter county's, making the event almost cost neutral.
- 10.4. Equipment charges have also been reduced, as the equipment had not been used, so no need to replace worn items.
- 10.5. £3,500 was kept in the budget for educational courses, such as Level 1 and Level 2 Coaches Courses, especially with the need to gain these qualifications for clubs in Stronger Affiliation, etc. SN asked the question that if Stronger Affiliation needed clubs to have qualified coaches, how could they proceed. CJ answered that a concession had been put in place that as long as coaches are registered for courses, this would be acceptable. Also, Table Official Courses and Referees Courses needed to be held.
- 10.6. It was again said that the practical sessions could be held at the Regional Academy.
- 10.7. MC informed the meeting that for the Table and Referees Courses, the majority of this was online, with the Referees Course needing a face to face meeting. So, a nominal fee would be placed to cover room hire and travelling costs for the tutors. The old tutor fee had been eliminated. Therefore, these courses would be taken out of the budget.
- 10.8. MT said he had concerns that the advertising of these courses by IoS. MC was working on Level 1s and 2s being held by IoS. He also told the meeting that courses could be run by clubs in the South West, but not by the region. He would look into this.
- 10.9. The Regional Academy costs had been changed by a rise in pool hire. The fee for the boys and girls was left at £10 per session. These were almost cost neutral if current number of players continued.
- 10.10. Fees for inclusion in the inter-regional teams had been raised from £70 to £75 meaning that the only costs to the region would be the team's entry fee.
- 10.11. All of this was subject to approval from the board.
- 10.12. Going back to Item 9, SN said that the committee agreed that nothing could be run in 2020. What was being talked about were the 2021 sessions going forward to the inter-regional competitions being proposed for the second half of the year.
- 10.13. ST spoke that following the meeting with the Leadership Group it was clear that Regional Training Centres could take place. Some regions training sessions had already restarted.
- 10.14. The cost of hiring the facilities over the sessions was approximately £7,000. With the changes in bookings by Millfield was a commitment of approximately £1,000 to book the pools next year for the RTCs. SN said that he, as yet, not being given authority to make these bookings.
- 10.15. CR said that as a region we had responsibility to look after the membership's money. MT said that as a region we also had a responsibility for the development of players, and if they were getting this in other regions, then we were damaging our future players because they live in the South West.
- 10.16. SN said that if confirmation is received that the inter-region competitions are due to go ahead in the second half of the year, that would give us very few sessions to prepare the teams for what is, probably, the highest level of competition that many will play in. We are aware that players fund the majority of the costs of the RTCs, all the committee is looking for is a total commitment of £1,000 from the region.

- 10.17. CR said that at the moment we don't even know what the membership of the region will look like, but the reply to this was we could have even less if we don't commit to future training for the region's players.
- 10.18. CR said that a lot of pools were not even open yet, which was countered by SN saying that in which case, the RTCs were even more important for a place to progress players ability.
- 10.19. The point was made that water polo is a team sport and that it was difficult for an individual to train without the other team members.
- 10.20. RD suggested that as CR had said that she was happy to put it to the next board meeting, then a paper be produced stating the recommendations of the committee going forward.

#### **11. Training Courses.**

- 11.1. This was covered under previous items, so no further discussion needed.

#### **12. Questions for County Officers**

- 12.1. None of the county officers had submitted any reports, therefore there were no questions.

#### **13. Written or verbal reports from:**

- 13.1. Water Polo Development Officer: MC pointed out that nationally there was no longer a WPDO, therefore suggested that this be removed from future agendas.
- 13.2. Region's Development Officer and Officials Coordinator: MC said that everything had been covered in previous items. He suggested that all county reps go back to the clubs in their counties to seek candidates for the courses. A survey was being put together to go out to all clubs via Mailchimp.
- 13.3. JS said that mini water polo is being relaunched, therefore it was suggested that this would be an ideal opportunity for events to take place across the regions to show what is expected level for them when they attend RTCs. The areas would be Devon and Cornwall, Gloucestershire and Bristol, and maybe North Somerset. South Somerset, Wiltshire and Dorset. Taunton would more than likely link with Devon.
- 13.4. CP informed the meeting that Dorset were happy to host one of the above sessions, inviting Wiltshire and Somerset clubs who wished to attend.

#### **14. Any Other Business**

- 14.1. It was agreed that BS item had been covered by the previous discussions.

Meeting closed at 20:05

Dates of next meeting:  
Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021  
Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021  
Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021

## Appendix 1

### Minutes from Coaches Forum, 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2020, starting at 7.00 pm

1. Attendees:  
Mike Coles (Chair), Stuart Noyce, Fred Fowler, Glen Mitchell, Luke Bray, Rhys Tamlyn, Roger Bossom, Robert Bunny, Phil Whiting, John Williams, Chris Norton, Dave Rostron, Simon Searle, Tom Bossom, Kit Greenslade, Stuart McKie, Huw Rose, Jim Robinson, John Spicer, Chris Holt, Ben Mardon, Jackie Roberts, Anthony Stevenson, Malcolm Hogg, Simon Tomlinson, Brian Steer.
2. Introduction and housekeeping by Mike Coles
3. Set up of the Regional Water Polo Technical Committee to the attendees of the forum. Also, the duties of the committee.
4. Survey to be sent out across the region regarding the position of water polo throughout the clubs in the South West, to ascertain the current situation.
5. Stronger Affiliation was covered, especially with two clubs in the region who have yet to engage with Jackie Hilliard, who is leading the way on engaging with the clubs in the South West. Also mentioned were the free Safeguarding courses being provided by the region, together with Team Manager training, coaches registered on the Swim England Teacher and Coaches' Register.
6. The need for further coaching and officials' courses was put to the forum. Swim England had already run a successful Level 1 course, and the candidates were waiting on the practical session, which, it was hoped, would be held at the Regional Academy in 2021.
7. Members of the forum were asked if they wish to hold a Table Officials Courses, and with the answer being a resounding yes, Mike Coles would contact Swim England to arrange for this to happen.
8. Mr Coles also updated the forum on the present situation with the Referees' Courses, which it was hoped would go partly online, together with face-to-face meetings in the near future. Successful candidates would then be mentored by senior referees across the South West.
9. Question and Answer session:
  - 9.1. Simon Tomlinson kicked off the session with explaining the set up for the future of the regional academy and the need for support from all areas of the region. There was a desire to raise the standard of the South West teams. Stuart Noyce explained the present situation with hopefully restarting the academy following on from the meeting on Monday evening.
  - 9.2. Rhys Tamlyn asked whether the region had thought about splitting the region, rather than just being held in Millfield. Maybe a North and South area. Stuart Noyce answered that we would retain 7 central sessions, and would also look at three other areas, one would be Bristol and Cheltenham areas, the other would be Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire area, and the third being a Devon/Cornwall area. However, because of the lockdown, this had not been able to take place. Fred Fowler spoke about the coaching situation that had been happening with Dan Kinsey and Dorset. Simon Tomlinson confirmed he had spoken with Dan regarding the training sessions, and it was agreed that this be extended to include Wiltshire. It was suggested that the county reps taking on this responsibility going forward.
  - 9.3. Rhys Tamlyn asked about a Level 1 Assistant Coaches Courses, and Mike Coles replied that if there were 10 people who wanted to do a course, then he would put one on. He added that he had also been asked regarding a Level 2 course online in the near future, the Swim England Leadership Group. Simon Tomlinson commented that he had just one more item on his tutor training with Martyn Thomas.

- 9.4. Robert Bunny spoke that several people, including participants in Barnstaple, had been taking part in the present Level 1 course, and Swim England were chasing for the second £100 payment to take the next part of the course. He asked if there were any plans for practical sessions to be arranged that they could attend. Mike Coles answered that it was hoped that these could be arranged at the regional academies.
- 9.5. Fred Fowler asked about Referees' Courses. Mike Coles explained that an online table officials' course. In regards to the Referees' Courses they were still awaiting the go ahead from IOS and the Leadership Group to get the go ahead.
- 9.6. The inter-county competition would not be taking place in 2020, but they are hoping to run it in the first week of November.
- 9.7. The inter-region competition is hoped to run in the second half of 2021. This is related to the work presently being done on the Swim England Water Polo Calendar. It was hoped that this competition would be bought under the umbrella of Swim England, but because of the present financial climate, it was agreed that this would be kept as it is at present, being run by volunteers.
- 9.8. Under-18s are limited to groups of 15, unless they are playing games. Over-18s are in groups of six, but there can be as many groups of six in their various bubbles. It was important that players who train at more than one club let each club know if there are any outbreaks of Covid. It was important that all clubs work within the parameter of their operators.
- 9.9. Rhys Tamlyn pointed out that the region was quite wealthy, and that in case they had not noticed, it was now "pouring", and that maybe some of the money could be used to raise the bar of water polo in the South West. It was explained that the region had to keep a certain amount of money in the bank.
- 9.10. Simon Tomlinson offered all clubs the opportunity to come and play water polo games at Taunton Deane
- 9.11. Mike Coles and Phil Whiting explained the present situation with the Bristol & West Water Polo League. It was hoped that that the AGM would still be held in January 2021, and if possible, juniors would be started before the senior sides.
- 9.12. Mike Coles asked the Cornish representatives if they needed any help from the South West. Jackie Roberts explained that the swimming club were back in, but nothing for the water polo.

Meeting ended at 8.00 pm.