

# Water polo Leadership Group

Minutes of the meeting held 07.12.20 via Zoom

**Draft minutes subject to approval at the next meeting Feb 2021 (tbc)**

**Present:** Toby King – Chair  
 Ben McDonald - Volunteer Lead  
 Chris Stephens – Officials Lead  
 Fiona Pearson – Communications Lead  
 Ian Mackenzie – SOC Representative  
 Rachel Bayley – Head of Performance Operations  
 Claire Coleman – Head of Development  
 Ekaterina Boyd – Head of Events  
 David Meli - Consultant

*(Members are identified by initials)*

## Apologies

Mike Hesketh, Competition lead; Adam Older, Officials Lead; Simon King, Coaching (part)

Min No:	
<b>2</b>	<b>Previous Minutes and Action Log</b>
2.1	Minutes of 29.10.20 approved and ready for publication.
2.2	Action Log updated with actions carried forward
<b>3</b>	<b>Update from Swim England</b>
3.1	<p>RB advised her remit to Regional Managers. RB confirmed furlough has impacted and reviewed monthly currently monthly. Presently working days are RB 4, NL 3, Nicola Ross remains on furlough. RB went on to advise detailed guidance available covering lockdown tiers on website; looking to pull together video resources for ideas on exercises during current restrictions. NL working on 2021 Calendar(s) (dependent on any Covid tier restrictions) preparing online resources in event of national lockdown. Parent/athlete sessions looking to deliver pre-Christmas, also working with other disciplines on S&amp;C, yoga session for new year. Waiting on outcome of BS/UK Sport investment, working on selection policies.</p> <p>DM advised UK Sport funding application submitted, decision should be released at end of next week (this dependent on DCMS funding) UK Sport will deliver clear guidance to ensure funding follows that of submitted application, Successful funding would be purely on British activity, and would also require some match funding from the sport. DM asked for thanks be recorded for WP community during his recent review.</p> <p>CC updated group on Development structure. No national discipline leads, now have four managers working across all areas of sport with key focus on strong affiliation alongside club operator relationship with focus of getting all clubs back in the water.</p>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Overview of 2021 Competition Calendar</b>
4.1	EB advised continuing lack of uncertainty affects any concrete formalization of submitted proposal to SOC in September. SOC have requested a review of

	<p>original submission reflecting continuing effects tiered lockdowns and overall uncertainty. Request to segment 2021 as follows - Jan-September - Sept 2021 onwards hopefully with clean post Covid 2021 season onward, objecting what is possible feasible/possible/realistic. EB outlined the 5 stage 'return to competition' roadmap that swimming have devised asking if WP felt this would be something they would benefit from. Group felt that further discussion away from this meeting is required on format of what/how and if this would be best applied for WP.</p> <p><i>Action: TK, EB, RB, CC to meet to discuss further. TK – SOC paper to be reviewed</i></p>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Regional Managers</b>
5.1	<p><i>NE: Calendar planning has been and remains prominently a concern – what action is being taken?</i></p> <p>RB advised this is high on agenda, working with TM's and coaches a calendar has been devised up to Sept. 21, monthly training dates from national academy to seniors with caveat to any pandemic variances. RB will be looking to liaise annually with Home Nations and BWPL, ideally in Spring time to ensure cohesive planning, and would see this as an ongoing collaboration. NL working on Talent dates, difficulty with confirming venues. Key dates should be available before Christmas to squads and on website. CS advised he has blueprint for BWPL from September and will distribute to RB, EB, NL, he advised that no BWPL ad-hoc competitions will be held pre Sept. 2021. All national competition dates will be added to calendar when finalized.</p> <p><i>Action: NL to publish calendar for next 18 months (accepting some will still be draft due to venue discussions) before Christmas</i></p> <p><i>Regions feel that clubs have struggled to recognize the pathway and level and expectation for National level players and their role within it.</i></p> <p>RB appreciates this message and is part of wider project to be undertaken on the pathway and 'what it takes to compete and win at national level'</p>
5.2	<p>SK joined meeting. TK wanted to acknowledge sadly SK was stepping down from the group. TK noted thanks to SK for his work with the coaching network and that he will be sadly missed.</p>
5.3	<p><i>SW: The region have gained board backing for regional academies, struggling with operators to get pool time. Issue with coaching with courses and costs.</i></p> <p>TK Coaching update within AOB.</p>
5.4	<p><i>NW: Are there terms of reference on expectations to align with National Squads? How/what budgetary implications there would be?</i></p> <p>NL referred group to the Swim England website Water Polo hub where details of regional expectation. NL to forward link to group. RB, as an overview a broader strategic piece of work reviewing pathway has been undertaken, the next phase is what/where this from a practical and operational point of view goes forward. RB would not see any budgetary implications for the coming season.</p> <p>Actions: RB to feedback at May meeting. NL to forward link to website/document of NGB reference expectations.</p>
<b>6</b>	<b>Competition Review</b>
6.1	<p>Review comparing pre/post Covid calendars. TK would like to ensure that ultimately this delivers a long term competition structure. TK asked for update on long term competition structure to be delivered at next meeting in February.</p> <p><i>Action: EB/RB agreed to update at February meeting.</i></p>
<b>7</b>	<b>Level X</b>
	<p>Level X is a concept which Swim England envisage working across all disciplines. Built around training Covid-secure sessions.</p>

	<p>Currently Swimming are live with Level X. Their format is based on time trial, times are added to national rankings and a monthly leaderboard produced. KB, NL, and Nick Buller have outlined basis for Water polo Level X to be based on skill sets, 7 sets across age groups, team assessed not individuals. Group to feedback via email to KB, NL by end of week. KB to forward Level X conditions to TK for review prior to publishing. KB would like to host virtual workshop prior to launch and for information to be drip feed via social media.</p> <p><i>Action: Feedback from group to EB by end of week. EB to forward final conditions to TK for approval.</i></p>
<b>8</b>	<b>New Referee Grading System</b>
	<p>CS delivered proposed new referee grading system. Proposal would dispose of current 'a, b c etc.' grading being replaced with Club, Regional and National level referees. CS outlined proposed process and asked for regions to help track down current/existing referees in order that an up to date baseline can be achieved to work from to ensure those that wish remain active referees. The system will be open to age 14 year upwards at Club level with officiating opportunities at the next level of Regional Referee. It is proposed ongoing activity logging and monitoring would be a requirement of remaining as a National level referee.</p> <p>TK asked for any questions to be forwarded directly to CS. Update at next meeting. TK advised the Swim England delegate group will look for talented referees for nomination to FINA/LEN and this process will help to establish current correctly qualified candidates.</p> <p><i>Action: CS to update at next meeting</i></p>
<b>9</b>	<b>2020 Annual Review</b>
	In view of current situation a small group will format review. TK welcomed any comments from Regional Managers, please mail TK direct. TK will circulate draft to group to include Regional Managers prior to submission.
<b>10</b>	<b>What is next?</b>
	To be moved forward to future session.
<b>11</b>	<b>AOB</b>
11.1	<p><b>Coaching Tutors</b></p> <p>TK advised that there is an amount of funding available from the Swimming Trust to appoint a couple more tutors. Ideally tutors based within SW/SE or Midlands/north. There is a requirement to have an educational background, (there is however a small amount of funding for qualification to be gained should it be required) Currently online coaching courses are taking place with assessment sessions to be set up as soon as practically possible. Get names to regional staff for submission to IoS in order that courses can be formulated.</p> <p><i>West Mids:</i> NG queries why there is no RPL as with other disciplines, will this materialize?</p> <p>TK advised that this is on the radar. CC advised that Swim England now have a Coaching Manager in place and this is something that will be looked at across all disciplines.</p> <p><i>Action: CC to raise issue with Coaching Manager</i></p>
11.2	<p><i>East Mid:</i> JL queried the possibility of being able to approach lapsed competitive swimmers who could be contacted by Water Polo as he had so far not had much success with this request. CC advised that this would be something to work with membership, there would be need to ensure that effect messaging with and appropriate contacts were in place.</p>

	<i>Action: TK to work with CC on process of connecting and engaging lapsed competitive swimmers to appropriate WP contact. Update at next meeting.</i>
11.3	RB will contact regional managers in new year.
11.4	SOC: young representative to be appointed to group, deferred to February meeting
11.5	TK advised that tentative plan to host a Water Polo tournament alongside the Commonwealth games in 2022, would be dependent on interest from other countries.
<b>12</b>	<b><i>Meeting Dates - 2021</i></b>
	<p>February - WPLG  May/June – WPLG &amp; regional  Sept. - WPLG  December – WPLG &amp; regional</p> <p>Meeting outline agreed, dates tbc, however TK advised please do feel free to contact him via email or any of WPLG at any point. Any suggestions for replacement for SK please send direct to TK.</p>

### **Regional Water Polo Managers**

North East: D&R Cousins  
North West: Mike Dixon  
East: Simon Lecomber  
South West: Mike Coles  
South East: Ben McDonald  
West Mids: Nigel Greenwood  
East Mids: Jon Lane/Fi Conway  
London: Peggy Etiebut