

President Roger Downing

Minutes of the Swim England South West Limited Annual General Meeting held via Zoom on 20th March 2022 at 10.30am

Present:

Directors: C Robinson - Chair, Paul Robbins - Vice Chair, Geoff Pearce - Finance Officer Daniel Corbett, Roger Downing, Andy Smart, Mike Coles, Brian Armstrong and Diane Lee. Gerry Griffin retiring Finance Officer

Past/Life Presidents – 5

Representing the clubs and counties - 21

Staff (non-voting) Mrs Jackie Hilleard, Mrs Chris Vickery and Mrs Stacey Millett

1. Apologies

The following apologies were received: Graham Cockill (Para), David Flack PP, Catherine Ralph Carrick Masters, Ben Batley PP, Mary Hooper AS, John Bird PP, Andrew Lelliott Stroud Masters, Paul Fielder Gloucester City, Michele Greenan Wiltshire, Lesley Leffers Licencing Officer, Rob Margetts PP, Simon Hague Newquay Cormorants, Andy Powell Cirencester, Nick Owen Tigersharks, R Honeybun Dorset.

2. Welcome to the ACM by the Regional Chairman – Mrs Chrissie Robinson

The Chairman welcomed everyone to this the first AGM for Swim England South West Limited.

R Margetts had submitted a query regarding the welcome and whether it should be undertaken by the President – the Chair responded that since the regionalisation back in 2007 the Chair undertakes this at the ACM/AGM. The President used to control the forums.

Sue Dors asked where are the minutes for the ACM of 2021 and should they have been circulated to be finalised. These minutes are available on the regional website and it was agreed to circulate the said minutes to all attendees and then both 2021 and 2022 will be finalised at the 2023 AGM.

3. Obituaries

The Chairman asked delegates to take a minutes silence for:

Brian Guy Past President Gloucester, Tony Stratford & Mike Lewis both Wiltshire.

4. To receive the 2021 Annual Report – as a pdf file on the Regional Website (swimwest.org.uk)

The annual report is published on the regional website.

Questions arising regarding the Annual Report:

Sue Dors regarding the Regional Agreement with Swim England and what does it entail. The Chair responded it is a working agreement between Swim England and individually with each of the regions. The backbone of the agreement is the same throughout the country and each region will have certain Region specific items.

Nothing financial has currently been agreed in this agreement save for items we have always supported – ie competitions. It is reviewed every 3-6 months and it very

basically is what Swim England will do for the region and what the region will do for Swim England.

R Margetts – Query as to whether there should be a Chairman’s report included – this will be added following this meeting once accepted by the members. Swimmer of the Year issue regarding recognising the swimmers of our disciplines – noted.

The Annual Report was accepted unanimous by a show of hands

5. To receive the Finance Officers Report and Balance Sheet from January – December 2021

This information had been circulated prior to the meeting together with the agenda. Gerry Griffin the retiring Finance Officer gave an overview and explained that as a region the loss for 2021 was approximately £10k

G Griffin has now handed over this role to Geoff Pearce

Sarah Taylor Soundwell – Asked for clarification around Consultancy Fees and Governance costs? Consultancy fees are for Jackie Hilleard’s work with the region and the Governance costs cover the basic running of the region.

Paul Chillingworth – Street – Asked about the loan to Swim England and whether it was reflected in the balance sheet which it is. Swim England are repaying the region £3k per year. They also pay a better rate of interest than the bank. The loan was used for SportPark mortgage repayments. The reason behind this was it is better to pay the regions interest rather than the bank as Swim England paid above Base rate.

Sue Dors – WSM – Are staff costs and furloughing reflected in the figures – yes.

A big thank you to the region for the Safeguarding workshops being provided free of charge to help support the clubs.

The Chairman gave a big thank you to Gerry Griffin for all his hard work and a warm welcome to Geoff Pearce as the new Finance Officer.

Gerry Griffin responded he is available to assist anyone going forwards.

Geoff Pearce informed the attendees he now has access to the bank accounts and any outstanding payments will be sorted in the very near future.

Finance Report acceptance proposed by Andy Ryczanowski and 2nd Sandra Yeoman – agreed unanimously with a show of hands.

6. To receive the Chairman’s report – Mrs Chrissie Robinson

Chairmans report given below:

I will start by thanking you, our club, county and regional volunteers. Without you our sport would not survive. The last two years have certainly tested everyone’s resilience and commitment.

Last year was a very rocky start but it improved.

January we went back into lockdown – clubs having to close their doors again, members deciding if they would be returning to the sport, deciding the category of membership to renew at – just for starters!

Many clubs registering swimmers at Category 1 or Club Train, some clubs only registering key officers because they had still not even returned to their pools.

The Region continued to offer training for volunteers – Team Managers, Safeguarding Time to Listen workshops plus officials training to make sure that once the pools were allowed to reopen Clubs had the people to make it happen.

We have also continued with our Regional forums for Chairs and Welfare Officers. The Coaches forum proved difficult to organise once the pools reopened so is currently suspended. A Youth Panel has been recruited within the Region and we are looking at the possibility of introducing further targeted forums for treasurers, secretaries etc to enable the sharing of problems as well as good practise.

Once the green light was given for pools to reopen clubs re-emerged even more quickly than they had after the first lock down.

Dorset County ASA also celebrated their 90th anniversary.

Level X swimming, remote artistic swimming grading and Regional Academies for Water Polo quickly followed with people eager to get back to competitions.

This was significant with the National project of the Festival of Swimming taking place in July. Within the Region we had two venues in Plymouth, catering for the clubs in Devon and Cornwall and the other at Millfield which hosted clubs from Somerset, Dorset, Gloucester and Wiltshire. These were a different format to anything held previously – social distancing, no spectators, masks etc.

But so well received by the swimmers, parents and officials! For this we must thank Team Bath AS and Plymouth Leander for hosting and facilitating these events at very short notice.

It hasn't all been plain sailing though.

Pool time and the cost of it has been a problem for many Clubs, they have lost many volunteers during the pool closures. There has also been a lack of opportunity to recruit people because of pool access restrictions.

As a Region we also need more volunteers!

Regional Winter Championships were nearly cancelled because no one came forward as Regional Swimming Manager (still vacant) or swimming events manager but thanks to a band of Coaches lead by Barry Alldrick (Poole) and Greg King (Mount Kelly) they did take place with the added support of Poole Swimming Club, lead by Tracey Hemmings and were a great success.

We are trialling a new way of working for the Regional Championships in 2022 which will put more emphasis on clubs facilitating events with Regional support.

The Masters Intercounty Championships also took place at Millfield with five Counties taking part, Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Gloucester and Wiltshire. Many with reduced numbers of swimmers

The Inter County Water Polo Championships also took place at the end of the year and was a great return to competition built on the monthly Regional Academies that returned in April.

We look forward to continuing with the development of our athletes across all disciplines in 2022 but we need you, the volunteers in our sport, to make this happen.

I will end by thanking our staff who are usually the volunteers' first port of call – either by email or telephone. Thank you Chris Vickery, Stacey Millett and Jackie Hilleard for all of your work to assist our Clubs and Counties.

Questions following the Chair's report:

Sue Dors & also via email R Margetts question regarding Financial reward for clubs assisting with the Regional Championships.

The Chair responded – there was no financial payment made for the club who assisted with the Winter Championships for 2021

The clubs who organised the Festival of Swimming received a payment.

For 2022 we are trying to get clubs to assist the region and have offered £250.00 per day to assist with the facilitating / co-ordination of the volunteers. All clubs attending will still be expected to assist with providing volunteers as previously. This is a trial and if successful we can potentially open up to other clubs going forward if they have the experience of running an event and the Swimming Committee are aware and in agreement.

R Margetts question re minute not showing on the website – Apologies if this is correct and will be rectified this week.

Chairman's Report acceptance proposer Mike Coles 2nd Sue Dors -agreed unanimous by show of hands.

Sue Dors also thanked the Chair for all her hard work over the year and what a fantastic job she had done over a difficult time.

7. To confirm the Directors of Swim England South West Limited as of today:

Regional Chair: Mrs C Robinson

Regional Vice Chair: Mr P Robbins

Finance Officer: Mr G Pearce

Cornwall Appointment: Mr D Corbett

Devon Appointment: Mr R Downing

Dorset Appointment: Mr A Smart

Gloucester Appointment: Dr B Armstrong

Somerset Appointment: Mr M Coles

Wiltshire Appointment: Mrs D Lee

These officers may change if the Counties make changes at their AGMs.

8. The appointment of the Company's Independent Examiners of the accounts – Best Accountancy Services, Newton Abbott

Proposed G Griffin, 2nd Diane Lee and agreed unanimously.

9. Regional Representatives to Swim England Members Forum x9:

The Directors as in office on 31.03.2022

10. Installation of the 2022 President: Mr Christopher Elliott

Roger Downing the current President said a few words about his period in office over the last 18 months.

The time was challenging due to the pandemic, and events were not happening. Roger travelled around the region to present the Regional Awards to the volunteers which was great. Roger expressed his thanks to all volunteers and regional staff for their hard work.

Roger wished Chris Elliott all the best for his period in office.

Please see below the Citation from Belinda Caslake President of Cornwall county regarding Chris Elliott:

On behalf of Cornwall County ASA it is an honour to welcome Chris Elliot to the position of Swim South West President.

Many of you will have known Chris for a lot longer than I have, so he needs little introduction. But for those of you who have not yet met Chris, let me share some information about why we in Cornwall are absolutely delighted that he is now taking on the role of the region's President again!

Chris started helping at the poolside when his children swam at Derby Phoenix swimming club and joined Caradon swimming club in 1984 and now is life president at Caradon.

Since moving to Cornwall Chris has helped with coaching and is still an ever-present coach mentor and fountain of all knowledge when it comes to swimming. Wherever possible Chris likes to talk to parents to encourage them to ask questions and get involved in the sport as volunteers.

Chris has been a stalwart official for Cornwall, the Region and nationally, for a good many years after being 'encouraged' to become an official by Lynn, his wife, instead of going off on railway excursions while she was at galas. Sadly, Lynne passed away a few years ago, but we are very grateful that Chris continues to act as a swimming official at swimming, para swimming, open water, and masters' events. Thank you, Chris.

Chris has been Cornwall County ASA president in the year 2000 and SW president in 2015, so he not a newbie to this role. Chris remains a lynch pin for Cornwall acting as our development officer and on various regional committees.

Chris continues to spend considerable time supporting our clubs dealing with our pool providers and the process of getting back to swimming.

We see Chris appear on our TV screens talking about how vital our swimming and see him marching across the Tamar bridge with his club rising awareness about the sport we love and the difficult future it is facing.

When not poolside you will be able to find Chris playing bowls. And I expect that if he ever retires from swimming, he might get back to visiting steam trains.

On behalf of Cornwall swimming, I would like to let you know how very proud we all are of you, Chris, and wish you the very best. Especially a personal thank you from myself, Chris has been a superstar in supporting me in my role as CCASA President.

Congratulations! And we hope you have a very enjoyable year as our Swim South West President.

Roger Downing from Devon supported this nomination

Andy Smart from Dorset supported this nomination and welcomes Chris into the role.

Mike Coles from Somerset supported this nomination and welcomes Chris into the role.

Martyn Neale from Gloucester supported this nomination and welcomes Chris into the role.

Andy Ryczanowski from Wiltshire supported this nomination and welcomes Chris into the role.

Chris Elliott then said a few words accepting the role and stating what a difficult time we are currently in and going forward there will be lots of hurdles to overcome. Financially for the clubs things aren't going to be easy.

11. Presentation of the Past President's medallion to the retiring President Mr Roger Downing

Discussion around the logistics of arranging this.

12. To confirm 2023 President Elect and presentation of medallion to the Gloucester County ASA nomination

Martyn Neale gave Gloucester County nomination – Dr Brian Armstrong

AGM 2023 – 26.03.2023 Time and venue to be confirmed

Thank you to everyone who attended today and the meeting was closed