

President Roger Downing

**Minutes of the Swim England South West Limited Annual General Meeting held via
Zoom on 26th March 2023 at 11.00am**

Present:

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

plus 47 members as listed in Appendix 1

Staff (non-voting) Mrs Jackie Hilleard & Mrs Chris Vickery

1. Apologies

The following apologies were received:

Roger Downing – Director
David Flack - Past Chair,
John Bird - Past President,
Ben Batley - Past President
Dennis Toogood - Past President
Andy Osborne - Gloucester County
Sarah Taylor - Soundwell SC,
Catherine Ralph - Carrick Masters,
David Inight - Corsham ASC,
Jill Morrow - Cheltenham Phoenix Aquatics,
Keith Fifield - Bridgwater ASC,
Keith Jones - Sid Vale Sharks,
Paul Chillingworth - Street & District
Frankie White - Taunton
Stacey Millett Staff

2. Welcome to the AGM by the Regional Chairman

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

3. Obituaries

The Chairman asked delegates to join her in a minutes silence for:
Derek Massett Soundwell Coach & both County & District President & Pat Holmyard
Western Counties Synchro Coach

4. To receive the 2022 Annual Report

The annual report is published on the regional website.
There were no questions or comments regarding the Annual Report
Acceptance of the Annual Report was proposer by Andy Rycanowski, seconded by
Curtis Young and agreed unanimous by a show of hands.

5. To receive the Finance Officers Report and Balance Sheet from January – December 2022

The Financial Statement was circulated prior to the meeting.

Please see Appendix 2

The Finance Officer gave an overview of the reports.

Questions arising from the Finance accounts:

Sandra Yeoman queried the Water Polo figures to which GP gave an explanation.

Gerry Griffin stated he was still listed on the accounts which was explained as he was still listed as a Director until 13th January 2022. He has now resigned.

Sara Dilks raised the question regarding the balance held in the accounts being high. It was explained that this is being gradually eroded with time as our primary income is membership fees

Acceptance of the Finance Report was proposed by Mary Hooper and seconded by Sandra Yeoman -agreed unanimously with a show of hands.

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

2022 was a positive year for Swim England South West as we were able to complete a full year of competitions and development in all of our disciplines following Covid!

Some were in conjunction with other Regions – Para with the South East and Open Water with the Midlands and was a good exercise in good working practise. We have also been working on 'cross border' areas of Governance with workshops – especially Time to Listen workshops. We hope that these examples will also promote this experience within our own Region with Counties following this example.

We have also faced challenges – pool access, rising energy costs and rebuilding our clubs and membership to pre covid levels. We lost volunteers and officials in all disciplines as well as athletes and we can see this across all Clubs and Counties – as well as the Region.

To counteract this we have had to continue to strengthen our governance at all levels – Club, County and Region.

Strengthening the Club Affiliation process along with SwimMark is to reassure both our current members and prospective future members that our Clubs are a structured, monitored and safe place for athletes of all ages to train and reach their full potential.

Constitutions, Codes of Conduct, risk assessments and workforce reports of qualifications, DBS and safeguarding training all help to provide the reassurance to people that join our aquatics family that we respect and support our members. As a Region we are continuing to facilitate and subsidise Safeguarding workshops and officials training as well as team manager training, Time to Listen workshops and forums for Welfare Officers and Chairs to support and encourage their continued volunteering experience.

Special thanks also needs to go to the Clubs who facilitated our Regional Swimming Championships in 2022 – Exeter City, Plymouth Leander, City of Bristol and Poole. Without them there would not be any swimming competition.

have Team Bath, Plymouth Leander and Tigersharks providing this support but are still looking for support for the Winter Championships at Millfield.

The Region is following the Sport England Code of Good Governance and continuing to build on this. The Directors – all volunteers - are continually monitoring the policies and procedures to ensure that they are fit for current purpose. This is also overseen by Swim England

We are now working with Swim England to ensure that all of the County Associations across England are also able to comply with these standards. The process is ever evolving as we all aim for higher standards.

We continue to view our volunteers and clubs as the Heart of our Region. Without you there would be no Club, County Association or Region. We all need to be united and working together to achieve our aims. Be that Clubs working together for competition, development or governance purposes – County Associations working together for the same purposes – get rid of the borders. Share resources to help and develop our teachers and coaches to gain additional qualifications. Welfare and safeguarding have seen a rise in concerns and complaints over the year at all levels. This has led to the Swim England Heart of Aquatics culture plan being issued in the last few weeks and this will be a very high focus for everyone going forward at Club, County Association and Regional levels.

I hope that all Club and County Chairs and Welfare Officers will get behind this and have completed the survey that was distributed by Swim England on Tuesday 21st March.

Swim England will be publishing their national Strategy for Aquatics in the next few months. This will cover their aims for the next ten years with focus on the first three years.

They are also working with all eight Regions to develop their Regional Strategies. We are currently talking to our partners to establish our local aims and targets which will be published in January 2024.

As a closing note I would like to thank our Regional Staff Members, Chris Vickery, Stacey Millett and Jackie Hilleard, for all of their continued assistance and knowledge to not only myself but Board Members, County Associations, Clubs and individual members.

Thank you

Questions following the Chair's report:

Questions arising:

Mick Cooke from Ilfracombe asked about Safeguarding issues and whether the issues were because of bullying and recent press articles.

Discussion followed and Marion Britton the Regional Welfare Officer informed those in attendance how the publication of the White Report has raised awareness in general.

Paul Russell from Devonport RSA felt the SG training received has improved greatly.

Acceptance of the Chairmans Report proposed by Brian Steer seconded by Sue Dors - agreed unanimous by show of hands.

Sandra Yeoman also thanked the Chair and Finance Officer for all of their hard work over the past year on behalf of those present.

7. Minutes of the AGM for 2022

The Chair apologised for this item being omitted from the agenda.

It was accepted as a true record by proposer B Armstrong seconded by Andy Smart and agreed unanimously.

8. 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.

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

It was agreed unanimously to continue with their services.

10. Regional Representatives to Swim England Members Forum x10:

The Directors as in office on 31.03.2023 plus the President Elect who is Jill Beard – it was agreed unanimously with this.

11. Presentation by Jackie Hilleard on the importance of keeping OMS data up to date for insurance and communication purposes

Jackie Hilleard gave a presentation highlighting the importance of maintaining OMS accurately and in a timely manner to aid communication with both the Region and Swim England.

Questions asked by Sara Dilks from Tiverton, Natasha Coon from St Austell ASC (club specific) and Paul Russell Devonport RSA as to why Swim England cannot notify clubs when safeguarding qualifications of volunteers is due to expire.

12. Opportunity for Retiring President to speak

Chris Elliott thanked everyone for his year in office and recommended the experience to anyone lucky enough to be nominated.

13. Installation of the 2023 President – Dr Brian Armstrong

Martyn Neale from Gloucester County made the nomination from Gloucester County.

‘On behalf of Gloucester County ASA it is an honour to welcome Brian to the position of Swim England South West Region President.

Brian is currently the Gloucester County Director for Swim England South West Ltd but for those of you who have not yet met Brian let me give you some information of why Gloucester County are delighted he is now becoming the Region President.

Brian currently lives in Cheltenham but originally came from the North West where he swam for Barrow and was club captain for several years.

As with many swimmers Brian left the sport at age 16 to concentrate on his career and obtained a Doctorate in Chemical Engineering from Birmingham University.

Fortunately for us, Brian returned to swimming in 2011 and is currently the Gloucester Masters Competition Secretary.

Brian trains 3-4 times per week and competes in County, Regional and National events. He is keen on Open Water Swimming and in 2014 Brian had his first taste of sea swimming in an event at Sandbanks in Dorset where he finished 2nd in his age group in a 1500 metre event in a time of 23.40 minutes.

As many of you will know, Brian is also a very good orator and he certainly uses this talent when he commentates at the Gloucester Masters Open Meet. For Gloucester County, Brian was President from 2018-2021 and he successfully oversaw one of the most difficult times our sport has ever experienced - covid. We, as a County, owe him a great deal.

As well as being on the County Executive, Brian is currently the County Open Water Secretary and also the Masters Secretary and I think this shows Brian’s strong belief that swimming, in whatever discipline, is a sport for all.

On behalf of Gloucester County, thank you for all you have done and are doing for the County and we hope you have an enjoyable year as Swim England South West President.’

14. Endorsements from the Counties

Dan Corbett from Cornwall supported this nomination.

Sara Dilks from Devon supported this nomination

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

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

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

Brian Armstrong then said a few words accepting the role

14. To confirm 2024 President Elect

It was the Regional Board's turn to select the President Elect nomination and from today the President Elect will be Jill Beard. A citation will be prepared for next year's meeting.

Jill Beard said thank you for this nomination and stated she will do her best to carry out the duties with pride.

16. AGM 2024 – 24.03.2024 Time and venue to be confirmed

– a discussion followed re face to face meeting or Zoom. Gerry Griffin and Sandra Yeoman offered their reasons for wanting a face to face meeting, Sara Dilks and Paul Russell disagreed – preferring to continue with Zoom. Sue Dors offered the idea that maybe a Regional lunch could take place for the ceremonial side of the meeting.

The Chair welcomed the comments and informed everyone this would be discussed with the Regional Board.

Thank you to everyone who attended today and the meeting closed at 12.21 hours.

Appendix 1

List of AGM attendees

Alex Court - Bristol North
Andrew Lelliott - Stroud Masters
Andrew Ryczanowski – Wiltshire County
Andy Smart - SESWR Director Dorset
Ann Reynolds - Past President

Becky Bellett – Newton Abbot
Ben Mullen - Bristol Penguins
Brian Armstrong - Board Member – President
Brian Steer -WP Committee
Chris Metcalfe - Keynsham
Chris Shears: Devizes (DASC)
Chris Vickery - Staff
Chrissie Robinson - Board Member - Chair
Claire Balecke - Melksham ASC
Curtis Young - Penzance
Daniel Corbett - Board Member
Diane Lee - Board member
Chris Elliott – Past President
Esther Rookes – Devon County

Gareth Bott - RNRM Plymouth
Geoff Pearce - Board Member – Finance Officer
Gerry Griffin – Dorset County
Graham Cockill - Para Committee
Jan Dykes AST Burnham
Jackie Hilleard - Staff
Jill Beard – Dorset County
Jo Jones – Marlborough Penguins
Jon Creffield - Blandford Flyers
Julie Matraves – Cornwall County
Karen Adams – Devon County
Katy McKen – Team Bath AS
Lorna Farbowski# Cinderford & District
Marion Britton - Past President & Regional Welfare Officer
Mark Stather (Tewkesbury)
Mark Foster - Frome Swimming Club
Mark Pearce – Okehampton Otters
Martyn Neale - Gloucester County
Martyn Fewtrell – Tiverton WP Club
Mary Hooper – Artistic Swimming

Michele Greenan – Wiltshire County
Mick Cooke - Ilfracombe
Mike Coles - Board Member
Natasha Coon – St Austell SC
Nick McDowall – Gloucester Masters SC
Nick Owen - Tigersharks
Paul Fielder - Gloucester City
Paul Robbins – Board Member – Vice Chair
Paul Russell - DRSA
Rachel Smith – Bath Dolphins
Rachel Workman - Swindon Dolphins
Richard Forrester - Cheddar
Sally Jenkins – City of Bristol
Sandra Yeoman – Past President
Sara Dilks - Tiverton
Stuart Noyce - Exe WP
Verity John – Chippenham SC
Sue Dors – Past President - Weston SC

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Appendix 2

Swim England South West – AGM 26th March 2023

Finance Officers Comments

The annual accounts for the period 1st January to 31st December 2022 have been prepared by Best Accountancy.

I will go through the Financial Statement produced by Best Accountancy and take any questions at the end.

Generally, the accounts reflect the return to development activities and competitions across all disciplines. This is reflected in an increase in annual turnover from approximately £124,000 in 2021 to £217,000 in 2022. There has been an increase in the cost of services, materials and consumable, staff costs and all other charges.

The overall affect of this is an operating loss for the year of £16,757 compared to £27,500 in 2021.

Turnover (Income)

The detailed turnover (income) and costs are outlined on Page 6 of the Best Accountancy report. There are a number of points to note.

- Income has increased in all areas due to increased activity and competition.
- Affiliation Fees have also increased

However, we are dependent on limited income sources, primarily Affiliation Fees and Licensing.

Costs (Expenditure)

There are three main areas of expenditure

Services, materials and consumables. The increase from £40,498 in 2021 to £109,409 reflects the return to competition etc. (Mention Water Polo)

Staff costs. Relates to all employment costs including NI, Pensions and Swim England recharges, not just salaries.

Other Charges. The increase from 2021 is approximately 5.5% which is in line with expectations in the current financial circumstances.

Current Assets (Page 8)

Although there was an operating loss of £16,983 in the year, the overall Assets at the end of 2022 were £359, 430 compared to £376,413 at the end of 2021.

The loan to Swim England has now been repaid to us in full.

Summary

In view of the current circumstances, exiting the pandemic and the current financial situation, it is perhaps only to be expected that there is an operating loss.

However, we will need to ensure that our finances are sustainable in the longer term taking into account further anticipated increases in costs, possible stagnation in income levels and other expected costs in relation to Safeguarding.

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