

# AQUATICS GB BOARD

## MINUTES

**FROM THE MEETING HELD 30<sup>TH</sup>-31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY AT THE HAMPTON BY HILTON, WEST BAR GREEN, SHEFFIELD, S1 2DA**

### ATTENDEES:

Karen Webb Moss (KWM)	Chair
Drew Barrand (DB)	CEO
Corinne Cunningham (CC)	Senior Independent Director
Joan Wheeler (JW)	Swim England – Home Nation Nominated Director
Caroline Green (CG)	Swim England – Home Nation Nominated Director <i>[item 3 onwards]</i>
Sara Todd (ST)	Swim England – Home Nation Nominated Director
Graeme Marchbank (GM)	Scottish Swimming – Home Nation Nominated Director
Ian Jones (IJ)	Swim Wales – Home Nation Nominated Director
David Carry (DC)	Independent Member
Piers Martin (PM)	Independent Member
Nili Safavi (NS)	Independent Member <i>[virtual]</i>
Aimee Booker (AB)	Athlete Representative
Liz Johnston-Trow (LJT)	Head of Finance <i>[item 1 and 2 only]</i>
Adam Clarke (ACI)	Performance Strategy and Operations Director <i>[item 1 only]</i>
Rob Henderson (RMH)	Business Development Manager (Minute Taker)

### APOLOGIES:

### MINUTES:

- 1. Welcome and Introductions**
  - 1.1 KWM welcomed all. IJ was introduced as the new Home Nation Nominated Director for Swim Wales.
  - 1.2 GM updated that Scottish Swimming have selected their new Chair who is due to start with Scottish Swimming in September.
- 2. Finance Audit and Q1 Report**
  - 2.1 Corporate
    - 2.1.1 LJT updated a negative variance of £8.5k for the Year to Date due to a few small forecast changes.
    - 2.1.2 DB reported that monthly reports are being circulated to all budget holders as well as the Board. As we approach Year End, April reporting will not be a full set of accounts, to prioritise resource.
    - 2.1.3 The Board agreed to introduce a RAG rating to the budget commentary.
  - 2.2 WCP
    - 2.2.1 ACI updated a few key areas, including increased pool costs in Manchester related to the larger Performance squad training there.

- 2.2.2 ACI answered questions regarding the forecast and budget; these were related to the Olympic/Paralympic cycle, shared resources, and changes to the UKSI staffing structure.
- 2.2.3 There was further discussion on dollar denominated spend and hedging in anticipation of costs related to the LA2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- 2.2.4 The Board stated a preference for an underspend leading into the final year of the cycle, to take advantage of opportunities that arise.
- 2.3 2026-27 Budget (for approval)
- 2.3.1 LJT clarified that from the previous draft, all numbers, overviews, and assumptions remain the same.
- 2.3.2 DB updated that Swim Wales and Scottish Swimming have agreed to an immediate uplift in their Memorandum of Understanding contributions, with an ongoing inflationary increase also agreed. DB gave thanks to the respective organisations for their support in the matter.
- 2.3.3 **Action: DB committed to developing a one-page document outlining the value exchange between Aquatics GB and Home Nations.**
- 2.3.4 DB will ask the Board for approval of the Budget once Audit and Risk Committee have had the opportunity to review.

### **3. Revenue and Commercial Pipeline Review**

- 3.1 DB gave a presentation prior to discussion; the slide titles were:
- Brand
  - Vision
  - NGB case study example
  - Audience
  - Demographics
  - Participation Base
  - UK Sport Data Pilot
  - Reach
  - Social Media Benchmarking
  - Assets
  - Events
  - Team
  - Partnership Rights Summary
  - AGB and Home Nations Collaboration
  - Commercial Working Group
  - Revenue Streams
  - Sales Pipeline
  - Merchandise
  - Experiences
- 3.2 The Board discussed the following related to the presentation:
- Home Nations, Aquatics GB, and shared commercial purpose
  - Level of focus on the 'life skill' message

- Modern data collection techniques and challenges faced by our sport
- Broadcast

#### **4. Welcome and Apologies**

- 4.1 KWM welcomed all, noting that this is DC's last meeting as an Independent Director. The Chair gave thanks for all the years of valued service to numerous Swimming Boards.
- 4.2 Further thanks were given to LJT and ACI for their input on Friday evening.

#### **5. Declarations of Interest**

CG declared an Interest in item 6.2 (INED Recruitment Process).

#### **6. Governance, Minutes and Matters Arising**

6.1 Minutes of the Board meeting held 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> November 2025  
Accepted as a true and accurate record.

##### 6.2 Actions Arising from previous Meeting Minutes

- 6.2.1 DB updated on the Social Impact plan and the three pillars. A programme of social impact activity will be taking place around The AGB Swimming Championships in April which coincides with the next Board meeting.
- 6.2.2 DB stated that the Risk Register and Risk Appetite review will go to the Audit and Risk Committee first, then to Board for final amends and approval.
- 6.2.3 KWM requested a spreadsheet of Commercial leads to be sent to Board Directors to review to consider how Directors could support such as contacts in each area.

##### 6.3 Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held 31.10.25

- 6.3.1 A verbal report was given in November 2025; the Minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record with the following amendments:
- 6.3.2 4.2.3 – International not Investor

#### **7. Chair's Report**

##### 7.1 High Performance Swimming Ltd.

7.1.1 Following FF's retirement from the Board, a new Director is required to be nominated to High Performance Swimming Ltd.

##### 7.1.2 **Decision: PM was appointed as Director of High Performance Swimming Ltd.**

7.1.3 Amateur Swimming Federation of Great Britain Ltd. – propose renaming to Aquatics GB Ltd. To protect the name on Companies House.

##### 7.1.4 **Decision: The Board authorised the renaming of the dormant company.**

7.1.5 KWM reported that with AB's initial term ending in 2026, a discussion has taken place regarding her role on the Board and her executive role conflict of interest. It is agreed that it is best for all parties if AB retires from the Board at the end of the initial term.

7.1.6 KWM outlined the process for the election of an Athlete Representative.

##### 7.2 INED Recruitment Process

- 7.2.1 CG left the meeting owing to a previously declared Conflict of Interest.
- 7.2.2 A discussion took place regarding a current Home Nation Nominated Director, (who is to step down from that position when the HN appoints another Nominated Director) who wishes to be considered for the Independent Non-Executive Director role. The General Counsel has advised that the Articles are intentionally silent around this matter
- 7.2.3 Having sought advice from UK Sport, the Chair met with UK Sport in-house lawyers, who do not consider this request to be an issue as the AGB Articles are silent, a stance concurred by the Sport Advisor. They applauded the intention to run a fair and open recruitment process.
- 7.2.4 AGB will run a full unbiased recruitment process and the Board seeks to add clarity to our Articles but to ensure that the Term limits are retained and protected
- 7.2.5 **Decision: The Board agreed to update the Articles to reflect the discussion regarding change of status, with the noted situation being allowed both now and in the future as long as term limits remain relevant.**
- 7.3 Sub-Committee Structures
- 7.3.1 KWM gave a concise overview of Board Sub-Committees. The Nominations Committee composition needs to be updated appropriately to help with INED and Athlete Representative recruitment. It was clarified that according to the Articles, the Nominations Committee needs to be formed of at least a Chair (KWM), a Home Nation Nominated Director (GM) and an Independent Non-Executive Director/s (PM/NS).
- 7.3.2 **Action: RMH to update Sub-Committee Structure Matrix.**
- 8. CEO's Report – Strategic Priorities**
- 8.1 Microsoft 365 Transition and AI Guidance
- 8.1.1 DB gave an overview of the M365 Transition from Swim England to Prism. The migration has gone well given the circumstances.
- 8.1.2 For GenAI, Microsoft CoPilot can be used as a part of the system. A Guidance document has been agreed that will be distributed to staff w/c 2<sup>nd</sup> February.
- 8.1.3 CG proposed that staff are made aware that WhatsApp messages can be considered official communication.
- 8.2 Reserves Policy
- 8.2.1 The Reserves Policy was last reviewed by the Board in November 2023 and needs to be reviewed biennially. Two options are on the table; keep the same approach or take an innovative approach more suited to the business.
- 8.2.2 DB has done some initial investigative work into other NGB approaches.
- 8.2.3 The matter will be discussed by the Audit and Risk Committee at their March meeting and return to the Board in April.
- 8.3 Safeguarding Collaboration Framework

- 8.3.1 DB reported that from an Aquatics perspective, not much has changed. Progress has been slow due to the inclusion of multiple NGBs outside of Aquatics. A new Safeguarding Lead started in the AGB business this month.
- 8.3.2 The Board fed back that clear movement is required in this area prior to the April Board meeting; this should be an authentic activity focused on athletes and victims, not a governance exercise.
- 8.3.3 DB will speak to CG as the Safeguarding Lead for the Board and report on the matter in more detail at the April Board. The Safeguarding Leads of each organisation are to be brought back together to suggest a consistent approach for the four Aquatics organisations.
- 8.4 Swimming World Cup 2027
- 8.4.1 DB shared the updated underwriting position, including contributions from GLA, UK Sport and World Aquatics – reducing the risk position to £70k. It was therefore proposed that this risk was underwritten by the World Class Programmes budget considering the significant benefit the athletes would have from performing at a home event.
- 8.4.2 DB clarified that the current contingency budget is higher than the risk position, meaning this is a prudent approach.
- 8.4.3 CC requested a full Profit and Loss budget prior to final approval.
- 8.4.4 Following discussion, the Board considered this to be a reasonable risk position and authorised DB to move forwards to a contracting stage. Once draft contracts are in place DB will discuss further with the Board.
- 8.4.5 The Board further discussed timelines and upsides to hosting the event.
- 9. BAU Reports**
- 9.1 Performance
- 9.1.2 The BAU report was taken as read. Several minor points were clarified by DB.
- 9.1.3 Following a discussion on Water Polo, PM gained Board support to seek the creation of a Water Polo Advisory Group.
- 9.1.4 KWM updated on the UKAD Anti-Doping Review; the final version is expected imminently and UKAD will attend the April Board meeting.
- 9.2 Business Services  
The BAU report was taken as read with no questions.
- 9.3 Growth  
The BAU report was taken as read with no questions.
- 9.4 Stakeholder Relations  
The BAU report was taken as read with no questions.
- 10. AOB**
- 10.1 Matt Ashman provided a brief on the AGB Diving International, stating a commitment to Sheffield for the long-term future of the event.
- 10.2 The Board asked several questions with regards to the event.

**11. Date of Next Meeting**

To be held in London Stratford on 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> April alongside the AGB Swimming Championships.