AQUATICS GB BOARD
MINUTES
FROM THE MEETING HELD 15TH APRIL, AT THE GANTRY HOTEL,40 CELEBRATION AVE, LONDON, E20 1DB

ATTENDEES:

Karen Webb-Moss (KWM)	Chair
Drew Barrand (DB)	Chief Executive Officer
Corinne Cunningham (CC)	Senior Independent Director
Joan Wheeler (JW)	Swim England – Home Nation Nominated Director
Graeme Marchbank (GM)	Scottish Swimming – Home Nation Nominated Director
Ian Jones (IJ)	Swim Wales – Home Nation Nominated Director
Piers Martin (PM)	Independent Member
Nili Safavi (NS)	Independent Member
Aimee Booker (AB)	Athlete Representative
Liz Johnston-Trow (LJT)	Head of Finance *[item 9 only]*
Adam Clarke (ACl)	Performance Strategy and Operations Director *[item 9 only]*
Mitchell Barrett (MB)	Governance and Executive Assistant (Minute Taker)
Paul Ouseley (PO)	Head of Assurance, UK Anti – Doping (UKAD) *[Tuesday session only]*
Emma Hooton – Smith (EHS)	Young People Education Lead (UKAD) *[Tuesday session only]*
Jane Smith (JS)	Anti-Doping Lead and Athlete Projects Officer *[Tuesday session only]*

APOLOGIES:

Caroline Green (CG)	Swim England – Home Nation Nominated Director
Sara Todd (ST)	Swim England – Home Nation Nominated Director
Ashley Cox (ACo)	Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel

MINUTES:

1. Welcome and Apologies

1.1 KWM welcomed all and thanked PO and EHS for hosting session; CG, ST and ACo gave apologies.

1.1.2 PO for on behalf of UKAD expressed gratitude to the Aquatics GB Board for attending the session.

2. Matters for Report

2.1 Board agreed with structure of the meeting, to be delivered by UKAD staff members PO and EHS.

2.1.1 PO presented an introduction of UKAD and went through departments and key responsibilities.

2.1.2 GM questioned who is responsible for insight and innovation in UK Sport, with an emphasis on the future of anti-doping.

2.1.3 PO confirmed that UKAD manage research and have a specialist team funded by the Innovation Commission which provides insight on the UK's expertise to protect the UK's leading role in anti-doping.

2.1.4 KWM emphasised that Aquatics GB must ensure coherent communications with UKAD regarding international relations and on the future of anti-doping.

2.1.5 CC asked if case management is an internal system for UKAD.

2.1.6 PO confirmed that the case management system is operated solely by UKAD, maintaining separation from individual sports while applying the rules of each sport.

3. Code and International Standards

3.1. PO shared the UK National Anti-Doping Policy, a framework by which Aquatics GB must comply with, aligning with the funding agreement set by UK Sport.

3.1.2 NS questioned how the Anti-Doping Policy ties in with the UK Sport Anti-Doping Code; PO clarified that the code sets a standard across the world for all sports organisations and works in tandem with the anti-doping policy.

3.1.3 PO outlined UKAD's Board responsibilities and highlighted that Sports Resolution administer board meetings; the staff of sports resolution do not a have direct involvement in the decision-making process.

3.1.4 CC queried whether suspect doping violations are covered within athlete contracts; PO confirmed that the 2018 Data Protection allows appropriate sharing of anti-doping information.

3.1.5 GM asked if there is a network for sports organisations to share investigations, to discuss matters of concern, with PO clarifying that information will get shared as appropriate to relevant organisations.

3.1.6 PO stated that within the Assurance Framework, there is a requirement for an anti-doping lead role, and stresses that anti-doping should be part of the Board's meeting agenda at least once per year.

3.1.7 PO declared that there must be one more Board member on the Aquatics GB Board that has a focused understanding on Anti-Doping.

3.1.8 PO clarified that Aquatics GB has already completed annual submission that is within the assurance review.

3.1.9 Within the AGB assurance review, UKAD found:
- AGB holds proactive discussions at Board Level
- Develops anti-doping education for relevant staff / Board members
- Closely works with home nations
- Has good knowledge management
- AGB embeds doping within board discussions

3.1.10 PO highlighted that the focus on UKAD's work is on the education programme, maintaining close communication with athletes on anti-doping.

3.1.11 GM asked whether there is a clear a pathway for anti-doping education and assurance; JS confirmed that the matter of keeping record of what athletes know is being discussed and aligning with the home nations actions.

3.1.12 CC asked if there is a holistic view of what best practice looks like regarding anti-doping education. PO emphasised the value of case studies, which UKAD can provide.

3.1.13 KWM queried whether any percentages or any exist to measure athlete testing completion. PO noted that is it difficult to quantify what constitutes a 'successful sport'.

3.1.14 GM questioned the extent of the Board's influence over the Assurance Review and how the Board can be confident that it represents a 'gold standard'.

3.1.15 IJ highlighted the responsibility for the anti-doping leads and suggested that all board members should consider anti-doping training.

3.1.16 AB stated the need for benchmarking data from other NGB's to provide a clear understanding and greater context.

3.1.17 KWM asked if the education statistics within the UKAD Assurance Review could be more detailed and if these updates can be provided.

3.1.18 JS stated that if she isn't present, UKAD or World Aquatics will have direct contact with the athlete, with Adam Clarke (Performance Strategy and Operations Director) also having responsibility. JS also stated that the Aquatics GB Anti-Doping Working Group meets once a month.

3.1.19 PO stated that disciplines change within UKAD's risk register and confirmed that Aquatics GB is not rated as high risk when compared with other NGBs.

3.1.20 PO introduced the new anti-doping code for 2027, and confirmed that UKAD are working closely with JS to inform athletes and coaches on any key changes, including the move to UKAD rules replacing British Swimming ahead of 1st January.

3.1.21 PO confirmed that UKAD are working with the DCMS on the UK National Anti-Doping Policy, which is expected to be finalise over the next six months.

3.1.22 PO outlined key changes to 2027 code:
- Change in athletes' interests and rights
- Changes to management of contamination cases
- Sanction changes for substances of abuse cases
- Protections to help prevent the perceived or potential for bias in the doping control process
- Increased emphasis on the responsibility of Athlete Support Personnel

3.1.23 GM asked where the athlete's duty of care sits within the code, and PO outlined that all NGBs have an obligation to work with UKAD, with responsibility typically split between the welfare lead and educational lead.

3.1.24 DB raised concerns regarding communication between UKAD and Aquatics GB during investigation cases. AB noted the lack of structure during investigation process; and emphasised that communication can be misleading between athlete and NGB.

3.1.25 DB noted the difficulty among UKAD/AGB processes relating to the welfare for athletes and how AGB must take responsibility for any charging of the doping violations with the athlete.

3.1.26 PO stated that the Anti-Doping Rule Violations (ADRV) Handbook was created for athletes to signpost for welfare support (new) with the British Elite Athletes Association (BEAA) providing additional support for athletes.

4. <u>Awareness Segment</u>

4.1.1 DB expressed that the emphasis is on coaches having the responsibility to have a clear understanding on anti-doping.

4.1.2 IJ stated that safeguarding should be imbedded from a young age, with athletes having a competent understanding when they reach the elite level.

4.1.3 DB stated that communications within AGB is different to other NGBs and are based on consistent reminders, onboarding and JS ongoing communication with UKAD for updates.

4.1.4 GM noted that AGB governance structure has anti-doping integrated as it is a professional governing body, whereas Scottish Swimming and Swim Wales place anti-doping among other areas within their respectable organisations.

4.1.5 EHS presented the UKAD curriculum, setting out anti-doping knowledge across Recreational, Talented, National and Elite levels.

4.1.6 PM questioned if the Therapeutic Use of Exemption (TUEs) sits under the ADRVS. EHS claimed that the violation sits under tampering, if a falsified document is provided. JS added that there is an independent member who is responsible for matters relating to TUEs, away from Aquatics GB responsibility.

5. <u>Risk Management</u>

5.1.1 Board agreed that 'whereabouts' failures pose the biggest risk to Aquatics GB. AB confirmed this risk from athlete perspective.

5.1.2 PM raised the risk that Peripheral violations pose the greatest issue, noting that limited athlete understanding indicates the need to improve the education.

5.1.3 AB stated that the 2027 anti-doping code will give athletes more confidence that the testing process will be more effective.

5.1.4 PM claimed that the Enhanced Games is also a sizeable risk to Aquatics GB and appears to be normalised by younger people, as perceived as a faster route to success, showing a clear threat to clean sport.

5.1.5 **<u>Action:</u>** EHS to share remainder of presentation, with topics such as the SWOT analysis and vulnerability of athletes to be included.

5.1.6 KWM thanked PO and EHS, on behalf of UKAD, for hosting the Anti-Doping session.
The Board adjourned for the evening.

aquaticsgb.com | info@aquaticsgb.com | 01509 618700
SportPark, 3 Oakwood Drive, Loughborough, LE11 3QF

Wednesday Board Meeting:

6. Welcome and Apologies
KWM welcomed all to the meeting; ST and CG send their apologies.

7. Declarations of Interest
None further declared.

8. Governance, Minutes and Matters Arising

8.1 Minutes of the Board meeting held 31st January 2026
Accepted as a true and accurate record.

8.2 Actions Arising from previous Meeting Minutes

8.2.1 DB suggested that the risk register meeting should be moved to June, following SMT review.

8.2.2 DB noted that the social impact plan is currently delayed. Social impact activity is still being delivered, as outlined in the Board briefing pack circulated during the British Swimming Championships. DB advised that a combined Social Impact strategy across the Home Nations could be developed, with a clear focus on event-based models.

8.2.3 **Action:** DB and NS to review the social impact plan.

8.2.4 CC questioned if the Articles, Reserves policy and Swimming World Cup should be added to the action log. DB confirmed that progression on these was handled elsewhere in the Board agenda.

9. Finance

9.1 Management Accounts for Corporate and WCP

9.1.1 LJT presented a summary of the management accounts, noting £40,000 income of from the WCP, and £27,500 in growth. LJT reported that £5,000 had been provided for bad debt, with £10,000 recovered, resulting in no impact on the bottom line.

9.1.2 LJT presented a recap on the current forecast, outlining a 10% contribution in year 2, followed by a 3% increase in the subsequent year after from Scottish Swimming and Swim Wales.

9.1.3 GM asked LJT if the WC transfer is appropriate. LJT clarified that a line-by-line analysis is being used, WC transfer came out to a larger number than expected, as agreed by ACI.

9.1.4 GM suggested that the WC transfer to be repositioned. DB advised that a structured approach to reviewing contributions could be considered, documented the process, as agreed by GM.

9.1.5 LJT added that an additional £40,000 was included in the current year and in Year 2, with funding then returning then to the cycle to determine the appropriate level of WCP support. DB clarified that the increase over the 4-year period reflected the phasing process.

9.1.6 DB emphasised the need for a formalised process, with ACI recommending that reviews be conducted quarterly.

9.1.7 LJT clarified the requirement to forecast quarterly, due to feasibility. Underspend would reduce because of budget timing, and underspend in the current year is still on track.

9.1.8 ACI stated that the underspend stems from the World Para Championships, with free facility hire provided. ACI noted that SSSM has a shared services model which has encouraged a cost-effective model. ACI also highlighted the rise in the cost of Elite training centres, especially the new contract for the Manchester Aquatics Centre.

9.1.9 NS asked for the rise of swimming costs across a 5-year period. ACI stated that there is an 11%-12% increase, which is flagged on the risk register and is regularly communicated with UK Sport. ACI also highlighted that the athlete to pool ratio varies over time.

9.1.10 PM highlighted the clear intangible benefits with having pool facilities at both Loughborough and Bath. DB agreed highlighting the sponsorship income from Speedo has come from Loughborough and Manchester pools as a result to AGB introductions.

9.1.11 ACI advised that facility hire fees are fixed across the four-year period but are not confirmed beyond that period.

9.1.12 GM queried whether savings within the SSSM delivery model are being consolidated through the executive decision-making. The Board noted increasing pressure from European Aquatics and World Aquatics, with UK Aquatics reviewing potential changes for National Federations, with a focus on affordability across countries.

9.1.13 KWM asked for clarification on the selection policy e.g. European Championships, and its cost implication; ACI confirmed that the budget is set before the athletes are known and that the selection policy is capped at 40 athletes.

9.1.14 KWM asked if the changes with UKSI impacted the organisation financially; ACI confirmed that the primary effect of the changes was around the performance lifestyle segment, which provides support outside of the sport for athletes.

9.1.15 ACI confirmed that the cost for the Junior European Championships has decreased for the first time in four years.

9.2. Budget 2026/27

9.2.1 LJT stated there is a 2% year on year increase in wages, with the timing process different between corporate and WCP.

9.2.2 LJT revealed the split on artistic and water polo remains netted in the balance sheet but confirmed this will be clarified next year.

9.2.3 ACI confirmed there is a £123,550 VAT refund from USKI. ACI added that specific purchases will be VAT free, and ongoing savings will be used for performance lifestyle.

9.2.4 LJT confirmed that the consolidated position has been changed, which is a manual intervention, meaning a longer process is undertaken.

9.2.5 DB stated that the ARC recommendations were taken on Board, and the budget pack has provided a consolidated account, and separate accounts have also been provided.

9.2.6 KWM invited Board opinion on whether the Board preferred the structure of the consolidated position or separate accounts; PM stated that Board should have oversight on financials.

9.2.7 CC suggested a one-page summary (or year-to-date view) with two separate pages within the same agenda item of WCP and Corporate, provided there was confidence for the income and expenditure.

9.2.8 DB noted that consolidated accounts may be more difficult to interpret. CC affirmed that the ARC is responsible for the structure of statutory accounts.

9.2.9 LJT confirmed that the finance team are satisfied with current cash flow; LJT to update board with consolidated papers on a quarterly basis.

9.2.10 **Decision: Board approves 2026/27 Budget.**

9.3 BDO Audit

9.3.1 CC confirmed that the ARC has reviewed the BDO draft including management responses included; DB affirmed that response to BDO would be reviewed and submitted in due course.

9.4 Reserves Policy

9.4.1 CC confirmed that LJT and CC will meet on 24th April to assess models with reserves policy, informed by the HaysMac recommendations (a focus on cash balance integration), with work to be completed by June.

9.5 Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held 26th March 2026

9.5.1 GM questioned BDO's wording on alcohol within BDO Audit, with LJT stating the need to communicate with UK Sport to provide clarity on the use/expense of alcohol.

9.5.2 LJT advised that any cost of a new accounting system will impact the P&L.

9.5.3 CC confirmed the current finance system is out of date and will not be supported, the cost of imbedding the system is larger which cannot be capitalised; KWM asked if that is part of home nations and Aquatics GB shared operations.

9.5.4 DB expressed the need for UK Sport to update their finance portal, which in turn will benefit Aquatics GB finance processes.

9.5.5 IJ confirmed that Swim Wales are undergoing a new system implementation, with AI helping the process. IJ noted that the AI process can be very time consuming and may pose an operational risk.

9.5.6 KWM and the Board thanked LJT and ACI and noted the improvement management of AGB accounts and presentation of such to the Board.

10. Chair's Report

10.1 KWM thanked the Board, DB, Swim Wales Chair, Scottish Swimming Chair and Swim England Nominated Director JW for working swiftly together to sign up to the IWG Women in Sport Helsinki + Brighton Declaration for being present for the IWG signing and photo opportunity. KWM reminded all that each entity needs to submit the required IWG information before this support is officially announced.

10.1.1 Note: GM left the Board meeting.
KWM informed the Board of Scottish Swimming's request and so asked for the Board to approve the extension of GM as the Scottish Swimming Nominated Director for a maximum period of sixth months (beyond GM end of term in August 2026).

10.1.2 **Decision: Board approved the extension of GM as Nominated Director.**

10.1.3 DB suggested formalising the IR group, recognising the support and oversight provided to for Aquatics GB in relation to World Aquatics and European Aquatics.

10.2 Chair term Discussion

10.2.1 Note: KWM left the Board meeting.
CC took the chair and noted that KWM's term would end in September 2026. Following a meeting between CC with KWM, it was stated that if approved by the Board, KWM would be interested to stay on for a further term of four years.

10.2.2 CC stated that there was approval by the Nominations committee and as such, the Board was asked for their support and approval for KWM to continue as Chair beyond September.

10.2.3 KWM returned and the Board congratulated her and expressed their gratitude for KWM's continuing dedication as Chair. There was consensus among the Board for KWM to progress, and the board gave a positive performance review.

10.2.4 IJ queried if there is a benchmarking exercise for the Chair; DB claimed that UK Sport are conducting a benchmarking exercise for the Chair, CEO and Head of Finance for Aquatics GB.

10.2.5 **Decision: Board agreed to extend KWM tenure as Chair from September 2026**

10.3 Chair Role Update

10.3.1 KWM announced her appointment as the NGB Chair representative on the Sport and Recreation Alliance Coalition Management Committee.

10.3.2 **Action**: MB to share Sport for Recreation Alliance paper pack with Board.

10.3.3 KWM raised athlete welfare issue following incident; The Board emphasised the requirement that a senior member should be designated for each event in advance and that AGB / the Board are aware of this, ideally with their contact details provided.

10.4 INED Recruitment Update

10.4.1 KWM provided an update on the current INED recruitment process, noting the eight applications received so far but there is still time for more applications. She reiterated that the senior legal expertise is vital for the INED role.

10.4.2 KWM to work with CC for the new INED position as CC will end her final term in February 2027, with consideration to bring in the role early, possibly as an observer.

10.4.3 KWM suggested that it is worth considering additional members from a commercial background, following IJ positive comments on the Swim Wales Board having Board members with a strong commercial background.

10.4.4 KWM thanked all Board members for appraisals, with KWM to collate shared areas of feedback from Directors and outline these at the June Board meeting.

11. CEO's Report – Strategic Priorities

11.1 Safeguarding Update

11.1.1 DB updated the Board on the safeguarding progress, verifying two documents: an independent report by LimeCulture and the Combined Cased Management Group (CCMG) with Home Nations.

11.1.2 DB outlined safeguarding priorities and clarified that this work has been prioritised to ensure progress within the next six months.

11.1.3 DB asked Board for feedback on AGB having its own reporting platform, drawing on the recommendations made by LimeCulture.

11.1.4 JW questioned if a WC budget would pay for WC safeguarding athletes; DB confirmed that the safeguarding platform will be taken out of the WC budget.

11.1.5 IJ expressed support for the system and raised concerns regarding the organisation chosen to deliver the platform.

11.1.6 DB confirmed there are ten reports a year on the current system, but highlighted LimeCultures independent report which recommended the implementation for a dedicated platform.

11.1.7 NS agreed with the implementation of the safeguarding system, but emphasised it must be integrated with the home nations for it to be effective.

11.1.8 DB stated that the initial feedback found that operational leads from home nations claimed that they were not satisfied with their current arrangements and would be looking to review, which meant it would not be viable for AGB to join their platform.

11.1.9 **Action:** Board to discuss the processes to join a single safeguarding platform.

11.2 Commercial Update

11.2.1 DB noted limited progress with commercial partnerships, and the loss of a potential sponsor due to Aquatics' insufficient consumer-driven data.

11.2.2 DB confirmed a deal is being discussed with Hilton ahead of LA2028, with further conversations taking place with Team GB in an effort to remove rights complications.

11.2.3 DB also confirmed a deal with Nagarro is being discussed; DB announced that the Uber Boats deal for the Swimming Championships was finalised due to the pre-empted success of the Championships.

11.2.4 DB stated the difficulty to find merchandising provider, with discussion with Speedo to be revisited following new management.

11.2.5 DB expressed praise for AGB Fantasy (in collaboration with athlete – initiated Sponza), noting 3,500 users for the Swimming Championships.

11.2.6 DB reported that the commercial team is looking into the validity for the creation of an AGB App.

11.2.7 CC expressed the requirement to ensure correct accounting procedures and VAT reporting during each sponsorship process.

11.2.8 DB announced that the ticket sales for the 2026 Swimming Championships averaged 8,000-9,000 tickets, compared to around 12,000 in the last two years, with DB affirming that the notable decrease is due to the Easter holiday break. AGB would continue to push to close the gap in the remaining days of the meet.

11.3 Swimming World Cup

11.3.1 DB noted that AGB is now at contracting stage with three entities – World Aquatics (hosting); UK Sport (funding), and GLA (funding).

11.4 Employee Engagement Survey
Results were provided to the Board for review and taken as read.

11.5 DEI Survey
Results were provided to the Board for review and taken as read.

12. BAU Reports

12.1 Performance
The BAU report was taken as read with no questions.

12.2 Business Services
The BAU report was taken as read with no questions.

12.3 Growth
The BAU report was taken as read with no questions.

12.4 Stakeholder Relations
The BAU report was taken as read with no questions.

13. AOB

14. Date of Next Meeting
To be held on Microsoft Teams on June 5th.