



Minutes of the Meeting of the British Water Ski & Wakeboard Board held on Wednesday 22nd April 2026

Venue: Video Conference Call

Attendees: Board Members	BWSW Attendees	External Attendees
Ruston Smith (RS) Patrick Donovan (PD) Michael Lock (ML) Katie Lowe (KL) Shelley Meyern (SM) Andy Phillips (AP) Anny Wooldridge (AW) Jeremy Nevill (JN)	Sarah Wassell (SW) Keir Boissevain (KB) Jane Peel (JP) Kylie Cooper (KC) El Temple (ET)	
Apologies:	Melissa Lock (ML)	

Item	Subject
1.	<p>Regular items</p> <p>1.1 Welcome - the Chair welcomed everyone to today's meeting and outlined the key items on the agenda.</p> <p>1.2 Declaration of changes to the register of members' interests and conflicts were noted.</p> <p>1.3 Minutes of the meeting on 17th March 2026 and Decisions Made Between Meetings - circulated prior to the meeting the minutes were reviewed and unanimously approved by those who were present at the previous meeting. A declaration was made re provision of IT services to one of the discipline committees however there was no conflict in relation to today's agenda.</p> <p>1.4 Matters arising – a document outlining matters arising / actions was circulated for the meeting together with a RAG rating against each in terms of completeness. In particular it was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approval to the recommendations from the Remuneration Committee for the 2026 annual salary review . - IWWF / UKWR (racing) Memorandum of Understanding re BWSW simply acting as a 'conduit' to enable competitor entry to IWWF international titled events without BWSW taking any liability or operational responsibility for the discipline which was no longer recognised under the Articles. Now all signed off by IWWF / EC (Europe), UKWR and BWSW. - Strategy Day – Availability was noted. RS suggested appointing a working group to consider and review the strategy and also utilise some external expertise e.g. those who have developed high participation volumes in sport from a relatively low base. Additionally, the set up of an external strategy group to provide some additional input and expertise. The aim being to focus on a growth strategy moving forward.

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1.5	<p>Action: Unanimously agreed that external expertise and input would be of direct value. Useful to assess and learn from other governing bodies and from those that also had capacity limits due to the nature of facility driven sport.</p> <p>Board Business Plan – a calendar / work flow matrix was circulated to note and provide clarity on the key business items, policy and other reviews that need to be completed to meet the Board’s terms of reference and regulatory requirements. Noted as a business tool to ensure the board were delivering to a reasonable timescale on the key areas detailed within.</p>
2.	<p>CEO Update</p> <p>2.1 Corporate Priorities and Plan RAG Rating – a document had been circulated prior to the meeting providing time for consideration, outlining the key Ambitions within the BWSW strategy, success criteria and a RAG rating against each. The CEO outlined that each Ambition had ‘layers’ deliverable objectives e.g. Grow and Retain Participation relied on setting baselines, measurement, scope of active facilities, youth engagement, removing barriers to entry, satisfaction rating and retention strategy. Additionally turning casual participants (which represented a more complex ‘moving target’) into retained, regular participants and converting these to full associate members in due course. Demonstrating value of course was at the heart of any membership strategy and recognising that individuals can have a very functional reason for joining e.g. to obtain an ICC driving licence or a very emotive connection with the sport e.g. a family with a long history with the competitive side of the sport.</p> <p>The document created interesting discussion on the challenges facing the sport in supporting the 8 Ambitions as part of a growth strategy and opportunities. Highlighted the need for the underlying objectives to be clarified for each Ambition and metrics / indicators where available and measurable. The board discussed resource issues around measurement in particular outside of the core membership base. KC highlighted that surveys often provided ‘indicators’ but sample sizes were not always robust.</p> <p>Action: PD would rework the matrix to include a number of key underlying objectives which could be RAG rated – acknowledging that some would need additional data capture to support a greater understanding in that area.</p> <p>2.2 People: People Plan - the Code requirement sets out that organisations need to have a People Plan, and to review and discuss it on at least an annual basis (at board level) and share the findings of that review openly. Sport as a ‘people business’ meant that thinking strategically about our people, and reviewing regularly the approach to workforce development, will directly impact the ability to deliver on the Ambitions within the strategy. The board fully recognised the need for a strategic approach to people planning which would mean looking across a number of different strategies or plans and seeking better alignment to achieve key people planning goals.</p> <p>The new EDI Lead job specification had a greater focus on people planning from the EDI perspective to improve reach particularly in terms of broadening the network in relation to delivery and there were some useful resources available in this area. There were examples of workforce development however this was to some extent ‘ad hoc’ on the surface and therefore did not currently have a joined up targeted / measurable approach.</p> <p>A key area of course was recruitment / volunteering from across the existing membership and it was clear from a very recent enquiry that there were people who had valuable skills and the desire to assist. Finding an entry point for this individual had not demonstrated that our volunteering pathway was particularly clear, mapped or accessible in the absence of any specific volunteer role being advertised. ML would contact the individual referenced above re their potential input on coaching and driving (PD would provide contact details).</p> <p>Action: Areas for focus included improved EDI reach via workforce, volunteering strategy</p>

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	<p>and coaching. Need for consideration of related actions to take this forward and give the People Plan even greater focus. EI would provide some fresh input on the plan. KC outlined the coach finder (new tool on the website highlighting availability of coaches) was a useful new website tool to support the People Plan:</p> <p>https://www.bsw.org.uk/coaching-and-qualifications/bsw-qualified-coach/coach-finder/</p> <p>2.3 Strategic Partnerships / Sport England – RS provided a summary paper for the meeting which outlined Sport England’s strategic priorities around which funding indirectly from the Treasury and directly through the National Lottery will be considered. The paper further outlined the need to identify the measurable successes from the funding BSW has received and delivered through our 2022 to 2027 cycle. It was also agreed to identify further short-term opportunities before the end of 2026 and to agree next steps to optimise our chance of success for the 2027-32 funding cycle.</p> <p>Actions: Quantify and evidence the return on the funding we last received through the 2022-27 strategic priorities – aligned to Sport England’s priorities. An example was the additional choices of watersports that clubs now typically offered eg paddle boarding, open water swimming and water parks which attracts a very diversified customer base that, with the water ski disciplines, totally aligned to the objectives of Sport England. The DoE initiative, to be discussed later on the agenda, also contributed to these aims.</p> <p>Some of the supporting evidence of the current cycle was to some extent detailed within the online reporting portal which PD could demonstrate / provide an overview of at the next meeting.</p> <p>RS’s paper further outlined the need to identify new opportunities that could be delivered in 2026. It was agreed that the strategic working group would also consider the opportunities and initiatives to optimise our success in national lottery funding by developing a business case for future funding / key investment.</p> <p>The variety of affiliates across the network which included both small voluntary clubs with limited throughput and larger commercial centres to include cable was outlined. KB highlighted the focus of the commercial centres on increased operating costs and business needs not necessarily being aligned to our broader development aims. There were opportunities for those centres who were willing to engage, and for the BSW to continue to support the commercial sector as a key provider of capacity, particularly in terms of our raising awareness and visibility of the sport.</p> <p>Water quality testing and bench marking water quality was highlighted as a potential promotional tool that could attract greater water usage e.g. during off peak capacity for open water swimming and other activities that would expose a club to a broader customer base.</p>
3.	<p>Finance Update</p> <p>3.1 Quarterly and Year to Date Position – Andy provided a summary overview of the financial position to include year to date against budget and any particular areas of concern.</p> <p>3.2 Approval of draft 2026-27 Budget – a summary budget across the key departments of 1 to 4 (business / mutual trading, core cost / back office, BSW development and Sport England) was detailed. The format of the budget excluded the disciplines (who could not overspend unless they had reserve funds), to isolate the key areas of financial risk and departmentalise certain costs centres to enable seamless reporting on grant funding expenditure and assist with the complexity of the partial exemption model VAT calculations. Since circulation there had been some reworking reflected in AP’s overall company budget to include the disciplines and other restricted funds. Key operating costs were broadly known and based on fixed costs, use of grant funds, salaries and</p>

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	<p>establishment costs etc. Increased income identified re commission, modest ambitions re advertising income (magazine), bank interest and an aim to improve coaching and driving income (an area of declining revenue in recent years). Membership income was based on the new subscriptions and an anticipated similar pattern of renewals across the membership categories (Family, Junior etc,) as of last season. Excellence income re the Disciplines in the overall company budget was based on the previous year and reasonable estimates.</p> <p>With some additional cost mitigation in relation to printing, IT and some other smaller areas this had improved the overall budget position as detailed by AP to a draft £17k deficit on General Activities (business, development and excellence but excluding restricted funds e.g. Jill Howard Fund), a non cash item of £11k depreciation charges included in the deficit figure.</p> <p>Actions: It was unanimously agreed to approve the draft budget.</p> <p>A note of thanks was made to Andy for his assistance, time and expertise on finalising the overall company budget.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Corporate Plan</p> <p>4.1 Promoting Awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4.1.1 Opportunities inc. Daily Mail update – RS provided a paper outlining the meeting in March with the Daily Mail to help raise awareness of the different types of discipline in water skiing and wakeboarding, particularly promoting the opportunity to take part, through a series of news articles (hard copy and social media) and through their YouTube series. Making our network and community more ‘visible’ was a key aim re improving profile, engagement and reach. JP and PD felt the meeting with the Daily Mail was a real positive opportunity. Need for quality content highlighted. - Since the board meeting it’s noted that the Daily Mail had published a news article about Joel Poland’s success at the Ski Fluid Classic in Florida. Action: JP was currently engaged with / following up on organisational aspects of this initiative to enable filming at an appropriate site and scheduling personnel / all in progress. RS would further follow up with the Daily Mail personnel. Promoting this initiative across social media, the membership, e-members etc would amplify and promote our work on profile and encourage engagement. AW to be part of the next Daily Mail meeting if available as a collaborator on the social media aspects. Momentum and sustainability to be a key aim with this initiative hopefully ongoing longer term. Open to provision of a budget (if required) to support this work. - The opportunity to collect content for social media, by all clubs and individuals, would be really helpful in promoting awareness as well as identifying ‘newsworthy’ stories that could be presented to the media through controlled press releases. - 4.1.2 Duke of Edinburgh Initiative – KL provided an update report on this scheme and the results of some initial research with our affiliates; there had been a positive response. Next steps, threshold for progression was outlined as well as a reminder of the potential benefits. Early responses to date were detailed as ‘encouraging but not yet sufficient’. The next phase of outreach will be critical in determining whether this collaboration can progress to the next stage (proposal to DofE itself with BWSW as a collaborator with their scheme). <p>Noted and agreed to move forward to the next stage. KL was thanked for her work in moving this forwards.</p>

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	<p>Post meeting and picking up on a point made by Anny, Sarah outlined her experience of working within Netball. Their initiative was that every time someone started a new project, for example the Women & Girls initiative or Disability Sessions, a form / email was sent out internally to all area leads so that they would be aware of the plans and could have early input e.g. including important factors to consider. This highlighted internally from different perspectives any potential issues e.g. clubs not having the required qualifications etc in place, in time. It prevented much duplication and last-minute work.</p> <p>A note of thanks was given to JP on the recent first magazine issue of the year which highlighted the 75th anniversary of the organisation. Advertising opportunities outside of a formalised agency briefly discussed.</p> <p>Action: KB to circulate a sponsorship document produced at the end of 2025.</p> <p>4.2 Membership IT System – KC provided a detailed paper outlining the recent launch of the new membership IT system which utilised the JustGo platform. Opportunities included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater potential insight from EDI data capture to then report effectively to see any growth/changes - Cost savings e.g. electronic membership cards / reduced print cost - Greater website functionality which will aid / inform future website development - Reduced admin which will free up some staff time and potentially save cost in the future - More effective administration / greater automation in terms of qualifications <p>In terms of board members / staff / clubs – the first year is really just about embedding the system, encouraging as many people as possible to use it, support members and clubs in using the platform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support in promoting the platform / clear user guides and helpdesk support - Processing renewals and managing individual and club membership online - Provide any feedback / areas for improvement <p>The second year will see potential for further development, e.g. if we made some of the coaching course classroom based, we could use integration with the platform so that tutors could sign off the candidates upon passing, which would then provide the qualification automatically to the individual which would reduce admin.</p> <p>Automation re lapsed qualifications was highlighted as a positive feature</p> <p>KC outlined that membership renewals were up on the same point last April, perhaps because of the use of the system particular by two of the largest clubs speeding up the renewal process but potentially an indicator of more positive membership uptake.</p> <p>AP highlighted the need to keep ‘promoting’ the new system in the magazine, e-circulars which KC had in hand as part of encouraging take up and usage.</p>
5.	<p>Safety and Risk Management</p> <p>5.1 Risk Management – RS highlighted a review of the risk register, update and a reformat for a future board meeting. He further highlighted references on the agenda items to the risk register itself. The aim would be to highlight key risks on the agenda and to integrate risk monitoring in each meeting.</p>

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	<p>5.2 Safeguarding Report – SW provided a summary report outlining oversight of safeguarding actions and updates on progress, to highlight risk, any reported concerns and to provide an update on meeting the compliance requirements as a Tier 3 funded body. No new adult safeguarding concerns were reported however there was one child safeguarding / welfare concern reported which was reported which had been dealt with and closed.</p> <p>SW highlighted the IT system automation was of assistance to her area of work re welfare.</p> <p>The safeguarding report was approved.</p> <p>5.3 Anti-doping Lead Officer Report – ML was unable to attend however a report was provided for the meeting which outlined recent actions and next steps. JN (board UKAD Lead) highlighted that the annual UKAD compliance process had been submitted and was currently scheduled for assessment. Imminently expired training of those identified in the mandatory groups to be followed up in a timely manner. JN and ML were working together on anti-doping on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>The anti-doping report was approved by all present.</p>
6.	<p>Board Sub Committees Committee Terms of Reference – circulated for information and as a reminder of the various governance areas detailed within e.g. conflicts of interest. In terms of the committee structure areas that required a formal review included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advisory Council role and core purpose and accountability aligned to our strategic aims - Governance structure and terms of reference to be reviewed with activity and plans being evidenced by supporting minutes and a clear quarterly or half yearly report to the board. - The clarification of the development 'function' - Volunteer pathways, entry points and recruitment to committees <p>It was proposed by KL that the Chair of each committee discipline should attend a board meeting. It was further proposed by RS that a standalone meeting with existing Chairs could be arranged which could also inform the strategy.</p> <p>The Chair then introduced the board effectiveness discussion where there was positive feedback on the board pack and today's meeting / meeting structure.</p>
7.	<p>Any Other Business - None recorded.</p>

Consideration given to the following risks covered at this meeting	
1. Strategic	
4	Operational IT service delivery
10	Reputational risk
14	Legal and regulatory

16	Workforce – People Plan
27	Exposure to shifts in public funding policy
29	Progress and measurement against the strategic plan
2. Financial	
18	Exposure to third party liability claims
23	Lack of financial control

The meeting closed at 11:45 AM

Minuted by:

Patrick Donovan
CEO