MINUTES

Of the meeting of the **British Water Ski & Wakeboard Board** held on **Thursday 30th October 2025 via Video Conference Call**

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1. **To Record Attendance and Apologies for Absence.**

   Present:
   Martin Winter
   Steve Sopp
   Andy Phillips
   Michael Lock
   Anny Woolridge
   Shelley Meyern
   Simon Sinclair
   Patrick Donovan

   Kylie Cooper, Operations Manager
   Keir Boissevain, Business Development
   Cathy Hughes, EDI Lead re Item 5e)

   Apologies:
   Sarah Wassell, Lead Safeguarding Officer
   Kevin Lochhead, Waterski & Wakeboard Scotland

2. **Declarations of Interest.**
   There were no changes to the register of members interest recorded.

3. **Approval of the Minutes of Meetings Held on 11th September 2025.**
   The minutes were unanimously approved by those who were present at the previous meeting.

4. **Matters Arising Not Covered by this Agenda.**
   a) Anti-doping and the mandatory list, 'nailing down' an absolute definition of 'excellence' an ongoing discussion with Kylie inputting on this point and of course Steve as Board Lead

   b) Qualifications Suite – Michael provided a brief update to include work on shorter coaching courses / syllabus and a planned pilot course to test the refined offer.

   c) HSE – no input received re the cable risk assessment drafted by external consultant John Puddifoot. Keir had chased up on several occasions with HSE. The ball was very much in HSE's court to respond if they had any points..

   d) Environmental Sustainability plan – ongoing in the background, Shelley outlined a new Sport England funded resource / national partner announced recently and a pending meeting to access support / expertise ongoing in this area of work.

   e) BWSW 'Overview' summary BWSW organisational overview document – in progress with Keir which he would pick up on again next week.

   f) IT system – a working group would meet on Monday to discuss legal input received on the contract and other related documents such as terms of use by the chosen IT provider.

   g) HQ property part / full rental - noted a fresh approach required and agreed. Patrick would follow up with the agent.

   h) Sponsorship – to be carried forward to the next meeting with Simon having to leave the meeting.

i) E&A Congress – some progress on AV support and an entertainer booked for the main day evening meal.

j) Key facility end of lease – welcome news that this commercial facility would remain operational as a provider of the wider sport, Keir was in contact with the new potential leaseholders re BWSW support and involvement.

5. Board Related Matters.

a) Advisory Council – Peter James (Council Co Chair) attended the meeting to outline their October meeting and issues raised. A number of key topics included the retirement of the current Cable Wakeboard Chair and request for a physical cable owners meeting (being scheduled currently for December by Keir and replacing one of the normal two virtual meetings a year). Also queries regarding lack of centrally sourced discipline funding, it was reiterated that elite funding for non-Olympic sport had long since ceased to be available. Steve Sopp had made that point at the meeting. A common theme of the meeting related to participation and the ever increasing operational cost of the sport e.g. boat insurance increases which represented a serious threat. Brief outline discussion as to how a group insurance scheme could assist in this area which Andy was investigating with major insurance broker Locktons. This was an area that had also been investigated during the last three seasons in particular. Steve outlined some of the issues around a very hardened insurance market which was risk averse in relation to some areas of operating such as the commercial sector and 'competition'. Steve said that broker Richard Ward who had helped BWSW clubs significantly previously was stepping back from insurance broking work. Peter further outlined a point on planning which was raised. It was confirmed that BWSW would of course continue to assist clubs and centres in this area. Tom Heaps had also raised BWSW profile raising support on social media in relation to Barefoot. The point was made that BWSW was reliant on information being fed in and which was not always forthcoming. Anny and Tom to be put in touch. There had been no BWSW action on the e-learning submission guide action referenced in the 15 July minutes. Patrick/Kylie would refer this to Melissa as part of getting the e-learning list sorted. . **Action:** Peter would imminently circulate the minutes of the October meeting. Peter would link up Tom Heaps with Anny re the above point on profile raising through social media. It was highlighted that board representation at any Council meeting was critical (Steve and Martin had attended in October). In terms of continuity, it had certainly not been ideal for two standing down directors to be the only BWSW representatives.

b) Lead Safeguarding Officer Report – Sarah was unable to attend, due to holiday, however a written update report was provided for the meeting. The report outlined completed actions such as the submission of the Ann Craft Trust compliance schedule and completion of the Child Protection in Sport Unit onsite compliance visit. Planned actions to include e.g. safety and welfare input on inclusion sessions, further Club Welfare Officer drop-in sessions and social media guidance in development particularly in relation to photography and young persons.

No reports to Sarah of any new concerns in relation to young people since the last report, an incident involving a young adult reported related to an international event. Sarah was liaising with IWWF and planned actions were in place around an imminent review of the Squad Contract / Team Captain responsibilities for the new season to ensure improved team support and greater awareness of the issue raised. Martin said that he had heard of an additional material safeguarding issue which Steve was also aware of. Steve would take forward and canvass with Sarah.

c) Director Candidate – Kevin Lochhead. Unfortunately, Kevin was unable to attend due to personal circumstances and would withdraw from any director recruitment drive currently.

d) Membership / E-Membership & Club Visits Update – the current paid subscribing member total stood at 4,973 (compared to 5,134 at the same point last season) with just over 2,147 e-members signed up. Keir had to drop off the call before club visits came up as a discussion point; Martin highlighted the points in the club visit note he had done previously to include pertinent points on safety and related operational matters such as water recovery. He would

recirculate for future reference. Noted a need to refresh operational safety with members as a key topic and related resources developed with external expertise at an appropriate point prior to the start of the next season.
Action: Keir to follow up on the costs of integrating facility booking system sign up to our e-membership which he would add to the agenda for the next cable site owners meeting. There was a particular success with one facility which had incorporated sign up within their own booking system which was delivering significant results.

e) EDI Report – Cathy provided a summary written report for the meeting which she outlined and some of the initiatives currently being worked on to include an improved Women & Girls offer for next year following on from successes in the 2025 season:

- 11 facilities delivered the programme and were each funded £500; total cost of £5,500

- 7 member clubs and centres had sent back feedback forms which provided a 'snapshot' of the whole 2025 programme.

- A wide geographical spread from Scotland to North Devon to East Anglia, reflecting BWSW reach as a 'national organisation.

- Our requirement that each facility had appropriate and up to date coaching and safeguarding policies and personnel in place as part of any programme led to increased collaboration between different colleagues within BWSW and better governance at the sites.

271 women and girls attended; 156 at more than one session and have subsequently continued participating. Although not directly asked, there were repeated mentions of participants bringing back partners and / or family members and uptake of memberships.

Cathy further outlined the focus on refining and developing the new Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, retaining for the longer term new participants from inclusive participation sessions and inclusion focus groups scheduled for the autumn. Furthermore, the need for BWSW to remain 'visible' re the forthcoming 5 year funding round and following the strategy submission journey ongoing via various workshops and engagement.

f) Sport England 42 Month Reporting - Patrick and Cathy had met on a number of occasions to finalise the latest reporting requirements, this had now been submitted before the end of October deadline. Thanks to Kylie, Keir and Sarah on their input also which assisted in providing good examples / essential evidence to bolster the report. The need to involve Andy in terms of Sport England interaction was reiterated.

The additional finance reconciliation submission on 6 month spend against budget had also been submitted and a credit for the next 6 months of grant monies would be received imminently.

The next step would be for a Sport England AI tool to produce an assessment of the report, once completed our Sport England liaison person would be in contact to schedule a formal review / assessment meeting. This would likely be in late November tbc and a BWSW director would also attend this meeting as part of their learning journey.

g) Racing – following on from some recent correspondence from UKWR / Tony Williams re a lack of response to a request for IWWF to recognise UKWR as the sole UK governing body for the discipline, Patrick had followed up with a request for a timeline / decision to be made in ample readiness for next season. Martin had discussed the BWSW UKAD and safeguarding resource with UKWR as an opportunity for them to meet IWWF compliance requirements. There was no immediate traction with UKWR on that but UKWR would discuss internally.
Action: Patrick would once again follow up with our 19th June letter to IWWF as once again there had been no response.

h) IWWF Response to Congress Issues – BWSW had written to IWWF on 31st July expressing their concerns on a number of points, after a further BWSW follow up / prompt an IWWF response was received on 7th October, points as follows:

> Several items raised in your correspondence were reviewed during the recent Executive Board meeting. A summary of the discussions is provided below:
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> Adoption of the IOC Code of Ethics:
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> This item was acknowledged and will be further addressed in upcoming sessions.
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> i. Audited Financial Statements:
> The proposal to have the IWWF's annual financial statements audited by an independent external auditor will be presented at the Congress, where the membership will determine whether to adopt this requirement. The outcome of the vote was that it was not necessary.
>
> ii. Policy for travel/accommodation/allowances:
> The current IWWF Travel Policy was reviewed and will undergo updates in the coming months to ensure alignment with best practices and transparency.
>
> iii. Ethics Commission:
> Mr. Michael Chambers, Chair of the Ethics Commission, will address the membership to present the commission's role and composition.
> Additionally, the appointment of a separate Ethics Compliance Officer was discussed at the last Bureau Meeting, where a decision was taken that it was not necessary.

It was agreed to follow up with the already circulated BWSW draft response to IWWF on the above letter to express the BWSW Board's disappointment in the IWWF approach. The draft BWSW letter highlighted the lack of an audit, line items for officials accommodation and travel costs, the lack of transparency on IWWF bureau agendas and minutes (all IOC requirements for recognised bodies like IWWF) and the submission, for approval, immediately before Congress of terms of reference for the Ethics Commission (which appeared to have been produced an appreciable period beforehand but not provided to members. Amongst other things these terms of reference allowed the Executive Board to tailor any process involving an Executive board member at the time of a complaint being raised. There was no provision for member voting on the membership of the Ethics Commission as for other key IWWF appointments)
Action: Martin would circulate a revised draft response letter for any further comments. Patrick would forward any final response letter circulated for today's meeting to the IWWF Chair, Executive Board and Secretary General once agreed.

i) AGM Board Rotation – the board rotation was briefly outlined in that each Director (including Independent Directors but excluding the CEO as a Director) shall retire at the third AGM following their election but they were eligible for re-election by the Full Members (eligible voting clubs and centres) for a maximum period of two further terms of three years. Additionally, any members co-opted to fill a board position since the previous AGM also needed to stand for election. The situation currently in terms of three available places:

Martin Winter (Chair) – due to resign imminently having completed nearly ten years as a director. He was currently in his final additional year agreed by Special Resolution at the last AGM.

Steve Sopp (Vice Chair) – due to retire at the next AGM having completed 9 years plus one final additional year agreed by Special Resolution at the last AGM. [This period was in addition to Steve's previous long service before the Sports' Code rotation requirements were incorporated into the BWSW articles (the terms of such incorporation having been agreed with Sport England)].

Simon Sinclair – co-opted during the current year and therefore was required to stand for election at the next AGM as per the Articles.

Action: Patrick would imminently draft a director recruitment circular re the AGM elections in January for circulation later next week to highlight the opportunity to stand. Martin would call a couple of potential director candidates to assess interest.

j) Confirmation of Any Code Requirement 4.7 / 5.2 Issues for Noting at this Meeting - ongoing update reports on development of safeguarding, and development of EDI however no particular key decisions made today that provided for significant / measurable impact in terms of social and environmental governance.

6. **Finance.**
   a) Finance Report – Andy circulated a set of management accounts to the end of August for information and any comments. In terms of the draft budget, as also supplied to the auditors, he outlined significant variances from the prior year, budget and year to date figures such as for coaching and driving income which had not met expectations. Slightly ahead on membership income at the moment. Overheads / core costs were very closely on track with the prior year and budget. On Excellence programmes and development expenses he felt that any underspend would 'catch up' in September and pointed out he had no future visibility on these costs. Net decrease in deemed restricted funds e.g. Jill Howard fund, as anticipated as grants were paid out to support Waterski athletes. **Action** – Andy would recirculate the 2025-26 draft budget which it was agreed would be the final approved BWSW 25/26 budget.

7. **AOB.**
   a) Martin confirmed his resignation / retirement from the board for end of the second week in November with some meetings due to attend before then.

8. **Confirmation of Future Meeting Dates.**

Board
Thursday 4th December 09:30AM

Some additional meetings may well be required to address ad hoc issues and the proposed time for these meetings is 9am on Wednesday mornings.

Board Sub-Group
Wednesdays 9AM

Advisory Council
TBC

AGM
Sunday 18th January Virtual Online AGM

The meeting closed at 12:05pm.

Minuted by:

Patrick Donovan
CEO