

**Minutes of the Open Water Committee Meeting  
12<sup>th</sup> November 2020**

<b>Present</b>	Paul Kendall (PK) Jacqui Kendall (JK) Janet Warrington (JW) Phil Pelling (PP) Paul Hayes (PH) Sandra Grant (SG) Sarah Tait (ST) Marion Westwood (MW) Steve Westwood (SW)	Open Water Manager Norfolk Representative Hertfordshire Representative Bedfordshire Representative Essex Representative Bedfordshire Representative Suffolk Representative Specialist Specialist
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**Also present** Keith Belton (KB) Regional Board Member

**20/21 Welcome and Apologies**

- 20/21.1 Apologies were received from Simon Yeates – Cambridgeshire Representative.
- 20/21.2 PK began the meeting by thanking everyone for attending, and asked if the committee were well.

**20/22 Declarations of conflict of interest**

- 20/22.1 None.

**20/23 Previous minutes**

- 20/23.1 The minutes of 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020 were agreed to be a true record.

**20/24 Matters arising**

- 20/24.1 20/16.3 – Hat sponsorship. SG reported that whilst she had done extensive research and amassed a significant amount of information, however the impact of the current COVID situation will require this to be updated when swimming is resumed to ensure costs are current. SG requested further guidance regarding what the region considered acceptable as a cost per hat, discussion determined that the best price possible was what we are looking to achieve. JK agreed to share previous costing information to aid with comparison.
- 20/24.2 20/17.3 – Training new officials. PK reaffirmed that BS are working on a revised open water official's training package which is still in draft form awaiting approval by all national bodies. Once complete the package would combine the theory courses for Judge 1 and Judge 2 together which was intended to result in a new BS OW qualification of Open Water Technical Official. Practical training would follow similar guidelines as the current J1 and J2 requirements. Under COVID restrictions theory courses would be delivered on-line initially.
- 20/24.3 20/18.1 – Chip timing. PK reported he supplied Timing Solutions with sample data extracted from the 2019 results published on the regional website, along with the criteria to allow the company to provide us with results in the format that we would require. Timing Solutions indicated that they are able to provide us with the results we wished. KB enquired if the company would be able to coordinate the input of entries as well as the output of results? This was not something PK had enquired about and would need clarification.

**ACTION: PK to approach Timing Solutions for clarification on their ability to manage an online entry process**

**20/25**

**2021 Regional Championships**

- 20/25.1 Event clash with triathlon. The 2021 date was originally selected to give additional time between our swim and Nationals. PK outlined a mistake by Whitlingham had lead to our swim and a Triathlon being given the same date. At a meeting between all organisers an offer to accommodate both events simultaneously by adjusting triathlon timings and park infrastructure layout was made. After reassessing the risks and receiving feedback from counties via their representatives a move to 18 July 2021 was chosen, if at Whitlingham.
- 20/25.2 COVID social distancing. The consensus of the meeting was that social distancing and COVID protection measures will likely still be a fact of life in one form or another for some time after return to swimming is allowed. Assuming outdoor competitive swims are given clearance, management of spectator numbers and groupings may be required to meet government requirements. Currently the area available for spectators and swimmers to assemble in at Whitlingham is restricted, which might be the limiting factor for the size of event that can be held. Information from recent OW events in Australia outlined possible measures to consider, further development will be needed closer to our date when UK COVID situation has stabilised and conditions for events known. One consideration is to move to a venue with a larger spectator area, such as Nene Park.

**ACTION: JK to obtain availability and costings for Nene Park, Peterborough**

- 20/25.3 Event entry. To allow committee time for clarification of situation regarding COVID and viability of proceeding with an event, no entry form will be made available prior to 01 April 2021. A statement to outline this position to be placed on the Regional website. (Restrictions relating to COVID to be outlined when the entry form is made available.)

**ACTION: PK to draft and submit website entry**

**20/26**

**Officials - Requirement for refresher training prior to events?**

- 20/26.1 The need to provide refresher training for officials wishing to participate was discussed and considered appropriate. Refresher training in the form of a series of Q&As similar to those used in the training workbooks was suggested the way ahead.

ACTION: PK, JK, MW & SW to develop suitable package for delivery.

**20/27**

**Budget – 4-year Plan and 2021 submission**

- 20/27.1 The 4-year plan was discussed and minor wording amendments agreed
- 20/27.2 2021 submission found to have a number of small errors which were amended. The counties charge of £250 ea was confirmed agreed by the Board in Dec 19
- 20/27.3 Discussion on possible income highlighted need to ensure viability of the event. Income relates to participation, therefore county reps requested to canvass clubs who have previously supported open water to gauge possible participation numbers for 2021.

**ACTION: County data to be available for Feb 21 meeting**

**20/28 Any other business**

- 20/28.1 Discussion highlighted the way participation numbers had increased as open water venues remained open whilst pools remained shut due to COVID restrictions.  
PH outlined concerns surrounding provision of qualified coaches for open water training, in compliance with SE requirements. Experience gained during summer highlighted the benefit to athletes attending OW sessions as an alternative to pool training, these athletes being significantly more water fit when back in the pool. For wider OW training to go ahead clubs need more coaches to be upskilled. Could the pathway to becoming OW qualified be improved, better defined or a more streamlined process be implemented?

**ACTION: PK will explore the OW qualification process with SE. At present qualification requires coaches to undertake IOS online theory training plus a practical assessment. When further information is available this will be notified on the region website and passed to county reps for distribution.**

- 20/28.2 With the increased interest in OW swimming the committee asked if a list identifying those clubs offering open water training could be published online?

**ACTION: PK to enquire with region to see if this information is already available in some form.**

- 20/28.3 With the current lack of competition opportunity, discussion on alternatives explored use of a system similar to the Level X currently being used in the pool. After some debate this was rejected as each OW venue would be unable to ensure distances were of identical length to those elsewhere.

- 20/28.4 If COVID restrictions have not been lifted by May 21 and prevent an event in July could an alternative date be considered? Committee considered this might be possible but no decision should be taken until close to the time.

- 20/28.5 Discussion about how an inter-region event might be staged later in the year if Regional events and Nationals were unable to proceed at their usual point found the committee generally in favour of looking at this possibility, though how competitors would be selected was questioned.

**ACTION: PK to approach SE and other regions to gauge interest.**

**20/29 Confidential items**

- 20/29.1 There were no confidential items for discussion

**20/30 Next meeting**

- 20/30.1 The next committee meeting: 7pm Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021 via Zoom