



Minutes of the Surfing England AGM Board and Surfers Forum held virtually on Teams 26th February 2026

<u>Directors Present</u>		
Julian Topham	Chair	JT
Jonathan Allen	Director – Sponsorship Lead	JA
Harvey Alexander	Director – Membership Lead	HA
Steve Price	Director – Board Safeguarding Lead	SP
Kim Vande Vilde	Director – Legal Lead	KV
Tina Beresford	Director - Athlete Liaison Lead	TB
Kate Eddy	Director – Performance Lead	KE
Paul Ratcliffe	Director	PR
Piers Martin	Senior Independent Director	PM
<u>Also in attendance</u>		
Ben Powis	Surfing England (SE) CEO	BP
Roger Sheridan	SE Gov + Compliance Lead, (Acting Sec.)	RS
Hannah Brand	SE Ops Manager	HB
Lenka Koubrek	SE Membership Manager	LK
Nick Moffat	SE Surf Coaching and Qualifications Lead	NM
Rachel Percival	SE Finance Manager	RP
Rob Tibbles	SE Media	RT
Beau Bromham	SE Junior Head Coach	BB
Lauren Tapscott	SE Events Manager	LT
Jack Patching	SE Adaptive Pathway Manager	JP
Max Palmer	SE Surf Community and Welfare Lead	
Phil Williams	Adaptive Surf Coach	PW
Jamie Wride	Junior Team Manager	JW
Andy Banks	Junior Coach	AB
Alex Barnes	Social Media Lead	AB2
<u>Apologies for absence</u>		
Surfing England Joining - There were an additional 11 Surfing England Members		

REF	MINUTE	ACTION
1.	CHAIR'S WELCOME	
1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Noted that the meeting was being recorded and thanks the Surfing England team for being making themselves available	

	for the meeting. JT briefly introduced himself and background, saying that he was greatly looking forward to serving the industry which had served him so well over the years and to working with everyone in Surfing England and its partners.	
1.2	JT recorded that we had no apologies, that a quorum was present, there was no requirement for proxy voting, and declared the meeting open.	
2.	MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING	
2.1	The minutes of the last AGM which had been published and available on Surfing England's website for the past year, and were recorded as being a true and accurate record.	
	Minutes were agreed	
3.	Annual Governance and Finance Report	
3.1	BP shared the Annual Governance Statement on screen. The statement had also been available on the website for the past month. It remains available on the website for the year.	
3.2	<u>Highlight:</u> Sport England recognise Surfing England as meeting all the requirements of Tier 3 code for sports governance. It's the highest level of governance for sporting bodies. We are also fully compliant against the United Kingdom Anti-Doping UKAD assurance framework.	
3.3	<u>Board:</u> We have had four new appointments to the Board, the Board are at the heart of our decision making process. We hold four full meeting of the Board, plus the AGM each year. In addition we have sub committees, Audit, Nominations and Inclusive line ups, plus working groups, Membership and Funding who meet as required. These all report to the Board. The table in the report shows a high level of attendance by all Directors	
3.4	<u>Risk Management:</u> Key strategic Risks – Finance: We continue to work towards creating a balanced financial model which isn't overly dependent on one source of funding, i.e. grants, sponsorship, donations etc. Our funding group work has a number of promising open discussions ongoing with potential sponsors.	
3.5	<u>Finance:</u> Accounts are available on website 2023/24. It's not a surprise for people to see that the majority of our funding goes to the big three areas: Team England, Events and Grass roots. Including what we spent on developing our coaching network accrediting schools, supporting clubs etc it's clear that over 75% of our funding goes on direct delivery.	
3.6	<u>Governance:</u> As reference we are now Tier three compliant. We put a lot of resources into achieving this level of governance over the past year, now we are at a level of maintenance and the cost of this will be shared across our areas of delivery. BP said that it is his belief that good governance is based on our culture, and that Surfing England has a strong and dynamic culture with a group of people fully committed to doing the right thing for surfing and our surfing community.	
3.7	JT Thanked BP and all the SE team for the work they have and continue to put into moving Surfing England forward.	
4	AOB	
4.1	JT briefly introduced the other new Directors, Harvey Alexander CEO at the Caravan and Motorhome Club who brings a wealth of experience on membership and commercialisation. Steve Price CEO of Emerge Surf who has extensive experience in corporate finance and Julian Allen Chief Executive at Channel 4 bringing commercial, marketing and media expertise to the Board.	
4.2	Finally, JT acknowledge the amazing contribution which Piers Martin has made to Surfing England, having first started back in 2016 with English Surfing Federation	

	<p>bringing an enormous understanding of governance, sports systems and professionalism to surfing in England, navigating us through tricky political shore breaks. Piers has been instrumental in Surfing England being recognised as a NGB by Sport England, he has always stepped up to the plate when required, recruited our first CEO, represented Surfing England on the Board of GB surfing. Piers helped steer us through lockdowns and furlough. Sadly this is Piers's final AGM having served his full nine year term although he is staying on to help with succession training. JT on behalf of all Board, the Executive team and many many surfing England Members gave Piers a huge thank you and wished him all the very best for everything he does in the future.</p> <p>PM thanked JT for his kind words</p>	
5	CLOSE	
5.1	There being no further business, JT closed the meeting at approx. 19:13	
	SURFERS FORUM	
	<p>The Surfers Forum part of the meeting is intentionally less formal and gives members the chance to engage and discuss issues with the team members.</p> <p>Ben started the forum by inviting Piers to share a few words.</p>	
	<p>PM Just a few words, I found a photograph recently of a few who were on the call back in the day when we first got recognition as the NGB for surfing in England, and we're sat on the beach chatting. I think Tina, Phil, Tibs, and Rachel, and we were sort of celebrating the fact we got recognition, and it was just such a hard slog. I look back on that now and I look at where the organization is now because of the people who are on this call and many, many more that aren't and we're in such a brilliant position as a national governing body and as a sport and as a family. I just think it's absolutely brilliant. So, it's been a privilege to be involved and I'm not going anywhere. I'm still around to help and to fall off my surfboard.</p>	
	<p>BP thanked PM and said that we would definitely hold him to that. BP explained that he had a short presentation to make but that first he ask the new members of the team to introduce themselves, after which we would cover the questions which had been pre-submitted.</p>	
	Frankie Hemery: Membership Lead	
	<p>Hello everyone. Thank you Ben. My name's Frankie for those of you who haven't met me and I joined the team in June last year, about 8 months now and I absolutely love, love working for Surfing England and love like the enthusiasm of everyone who's in the team. It's so good.</p>	

	<p>I'm the membership lead. I'm looking building value into the membership and really building our membership community. That goes across lots of different areas of the business, which is really interesting. I work quite a lot with Julian and Harvey on the overall how we're going to push membership forward and with Max as well, who is the club's lead.</p> <p>My main focus really is to make the membership feel more diverse and inclusive and welcoming because we know from our membership data that we've got quite a specific kind of audience at the moment and we'd love to broaden that. So that's my main focus really for this year is building on that.</p> <p>We launched the digital membership card at the end of last year as well which has been in the works for a long time. So it's really nice to get that over the line and have that going forward, bringing on new community partners as well as discounts onto the membership card and bringing new Partners on board to support the membership community. I've also been lucky enough to sort of help out events and stuff a lot as well. So that's been really fun. So yeah, I've loved it so far.</p>	
	<p>Ben then Introduced Alex Barnes who whilst newly appointed hadn't actually started working. Due to start at the end of March.</p>	
	<p>Alex Barnes: Media and Content Lead</p>	
	<p>Yeah, so hi everyone. My name's Alex, as Ben has said, and I'm going to be joining as the social media and content lead. I've obviously not joined the team, but when I do in March, I'm really excited to get stuck in and I have several fun ideas up my sleeve.</p> <p>I'm going to be working really closely with everyone in the Surfing England team, all the coaches and then hopefully all the surfers within the squads. And it'd be really nice to get some more surfing content out there and see what athletes kind of want to showcase of surfing themselves.</p> <p>And yeah, hopefully we'll see lots of growth within the social media channels and some of that will turn to membership, especially within grassroots surfing. That'd be really great. But yeah, it was lovely to meet you all digitally, even if it's not in person. And I'm looking forward to working with lots of you in the future.</p>	
	<p>Ben presented his review of the year and look forward which is available here:</p>	
	<p>Following the presentation we went on to address the four pre-submitted questions</p>	
	<p>Question One: can you provide information about what will be happening for Juniors this year? Jamie's presentation can be accessed here:</p>	
	<p>Question Two: Would surfing England consider appointing someone to look after technical duties i.e. a technical director to focus specifically on judging and ISA relationship with Judge?</p>	
	<p>Hannah took this question: Yeah, thanks Ben and thanks Tom for the question. Its definitely really important, we really want to drive our standards of judging at our events. It's something we're really conscious of. Lauren and myself both talk about it a lot. In short, a technical committee director, not yet, but there are things we're doing in the Interim.</p>	

	<p>Max has been working closely with Head Judge Esther Spears on creating a club judge course and the whole reason for this to make it more accessible for people to become a judge, the price point and the ISA are two of the challenges at the minute. So that's really exciting. They're looking at a test with the Surfing England Team in April/May and then try and roll it out across the clubs across the country, which would be really, really exciting and that'd be a step between a basic sort of e-learning course and something a bit more hands on. And then I'm sure from there we'll find lots more people who are super keen to progress.</p> <p>Lauren has also been working hard with Esther to work through opportunities to run another ISA course and to get more people through their qualification. In terms of in-house, we are monitoring a lot more judges, performance and feedback at the end of every event the head judges sent a form to fill in.</p> <p>Lauren's is tracking all of that and also tracking other events that they're going to and getting feedback. So absolutely it's something we are looking at a lot more what our judges are up to and we definitely would really like to see some of our judges coming through European panels upskilling.</p>	
	<p>Question three: Can we provide any information about plans for the JSS</p>	
	<p>Max took this question, his presentation can be seen here:</p>	
	<p>Question four: Can Surfing England reconsider the format of the GB Cup</p>	
	<p>Ben took this question:</p> <p>We have previously asked about the format of the the British Cup and having an open and I think I can kind of see Piers probably smiling at this point as we've had these these discussions previously.</p> <p>It's something we have, we have put to GB in the past, and I think their main consideration is really around what delivers maximum value to their pathway. So what, is going to be most useful to the surfers they have in their progression programme and I think we may see some changes in 2026 in terms of their focus.</p> <p>We may see a move away from them delivering competition for example, and just increasing the focus on the performance pathway and the amount of access the surfers on that programme have to coaching.</p> <p>We'll see how that pans out. But yeah, the kind of short answer to that that question is it's just not really one for us, it's one for GB. But you're more than welcome and I would encourage anyone who's got questions like that to put them to GB and it is actually a GB board meeting tomorrow, which I'll be attending and I'm happy to put that on your behalf. I would also encourage you, they've now got an info e-mail address on their website and I would encourage anyone with GB cup type questions to put them to GB.</p>	
	<p>Having answered the pre submitted question with there still be available time questions were invited from attendees</p>	
	<p>Thomas Cahour (TC) asked if we would be doing events for skimboarding, body boarding, Body surfing?</p>	

	<p>BP we have run body boarding events in the past and its something which we would love to do going forward. Unfortunately it's not something which is in our immediate plans due to budget and resources. We continue to work with body boarding clubs and when resources permit it would be something which we would definitely look to undertaking.</p> <p>TC offered to explore opportunities with exchanges with the French Federation.</p> <p>BP Cooperation and connections with other federations are always welcome. We are attending the European Surfing Federation AGM in the next month.</p>	
	<p>Phil Williams (PW) Asked Mary Welford also on the call to introduce Issac and give him a chance to tell everyone about his "surf every day of the year" in aid of Children in Need"</p> <p>We managed to overcome a few technical issues and Isaac was able to tell everyone about his amazing feat, how it was going and directed anyone interested to his "go fund me' page.</p>	
	<p>BP closed by thanking all of the Surfing England team for being absolute legends and thanked the board for all their entirely voluntary hard work and invaluable contributions.</p>	
	<p>JT closed the forum by thanking Ben and the team as well.</p>	
	<p>Meeting closed at 20;19</p>	