



DERBYSHIRE AMATEUR SWIMMING ASSOCIATION

Affiliated to Swim England East Midland Region

Notes of the Meeting Ordinary General Meeting Sunday 12th May 2019 Dance Studio Alfreton Leisure Centre

Present: Mr. D. Whitlam (Chair), Mrs S Llewellyn (Secretary), Mr. J. Hidle (DASA Exec), Dr Barrie May (DASA Life Member and DASA Exec), Mr C Donson (DASA Exec and Ripley), Mrs. B. Ingram (DASA Exec and Derventio eXcel), Helen Bickerstaff (East Midlands Development Officer), Mr I. Davey (DASA President Elect), Mr. P. Spink (DASA Exec and City of Derby), Mr T Parr (DASA Exec and Ripley), Mrs M Roberts, Mrs E. Dempsey (Vice Chair DASA and Chesterfield), Mrs C Denning (DASA President and Ripley), Mr L Davis (Buxton), Mrs M Edwards (DASA Life Member), Mrs J Mellor (DASA Honary Vice President), Mr R Shepherd (DASA Officials Co-ordinator and City of Derby), Mrs S Kelly (DASA Exec and Long Eaton), Mrs T Ward, (County Welfare Officer and Chesterfield) Mr K Kelly (Derventio eXcel and Long Eaton), Ms C O'Neill (Dronfield), Mrs H Akers (Long Eaton), Mr R Richie (Buxton), Mrs A Hidle (DASA Life Member and Long Eaton), Mrs S Mitchell (Rykneld), Mr J Main (Derventio eXcel), Mr R Rantzen (Belper Marlins), Ms, E Simpson (Long Eaton), Mr O Purgavie (Long Eaton), Mr M Tanner (Chesterfield), Mr S Layton (City of Derby), Mr A Hall (Etwall Eagles and Derventio eXcel), Mrs K Vassilea (City of Derby), Ms M Bell (City of Derby), Mrs J Beswick (DASA Life Member), Mrs J Mayolfi-Rebaudi (Rykneld), Mr Peter Rainbow (Rykneld), Mrs P Hibbs (Etwall Eagles), Mrs C Cotton (Ilkeston), Mr D Pratt Derby Phoenix, Mr A Phillips (Long Eaton), Ms S Morton (Long Eaton), Mrs C Weeds (Belper Marlins), Mrs L Whittle (Derventio eXcel), Mr D Rae-Mclean (Derventio eXcel)

1) **Apologies:** were recorded as received

2) **Welcome from the Chair**

Doug Whitlam (DW) welcomed everyone to the Ordinary General Meeting and outlined the format of the events.

DW gave a brief history which resulted in the formation of the County Pathway and Derventio eXcel.

Due to the natural split across the County swimmers were categorised into North, South and Central. Those who wanted to progress and maximise their talent would have to leave their home club and either join COD or migrate outside the County to Nottingham Nova in the South and Sheffield or Stockport in the North. Those in the centre of the County would be limited for options without extended travelling and would either not maximise their potential or sometimes leave the sport as they were unable to progress. The home club lost their most talented swimmers, the County also lost many to neighbouring Counties. The result was frustrated, angry coaches and clubs and much of that anger was tended to be directed towards COD who were the main outlet for talented swimmers within the County.

The County Clubs agreed to form a Performance Squad in the County with the agreement that any swimmers selected would also have to remain members of their home clubs and this was built into the DX constitution. Derventio eXcel was created and to accommodate the new arrangements City of Derby gave up their top squad swimmers, financial benefits and water time. The criteria and standards for membership were created by the DX coaches at that time.

3) Presentation County Championships

Connor Donson presented his report (see attached), key outcomes were:

- Championships and additional income of £700 from the Swim Shop/Sportyswim
- Promotions of the championships including an improved quality of programme and redesign and quality of the County T shirts for officials and helpers
- Outcome from the County Relay Survey
- Replacement of damaged existing trophies and the recycling of any trophies which are of a high value
- Review of officials mileage

4) Association Finance Summary

Sharon Llewellyn presented the Finance report in the absence of Debbie Halford, see attached. Audited accounts will be presented at the Annual General Meeting in June 2019.

5) County Development plan

Helen Bickerstaff, East Midlands Development Officer presented a report on the achievements made across the County in the past 12 months. Key issues included:

- 19 out of 22 clubs are now registered with SwimMark
- The County had trained 21 J1, 15 J2 and 6 J2S, thanks were offered to Ralph Shepherd for co-ordinating this training
- Recognition to Babs Ingram and Pippa Hibbs on their recent appointment as qualified Referees
- Successful bid for club development funding from Derbyshire County Council. Further bids to be applied for where relevant as and when they become available

A copy of Helen's report is attached

6) County Pathway

Jamie Main, Head Coach and Duane Rae-Mclean, Chairman – Derventio eXcel (DX) gave a presentation on the County Pathway and the selection criteria for swimmers across the County to the performance pathway. A copy of the presentation is attached.

Questions from the floor were invited and received as follows:

Christine Denning – what is the criteria for swimmers joining DX?

JM confirmed that entrance to the pathway centred around performance at the County, Regional and National Championships and was based on qualifiers and finalists. The minimum age is 10/11 years and is in line with Swim England guidance. Recruitment is now via invitation through the home clubs. Discussions take place with the head coach and attitude, performance and maturity are also taken into account.

Tom Parr – what happens if the parent/swimmer approaches DX?

JM – DX would contact the home club

Christine Denning – What arrangements does DX have in place to liaise with the Learn to Swim Programme?

JM – DX have met with the City Council to discuss the current Learn to swim programme on an advice and influence basis. It is not DX's role to take over or become involved in the Learn to Swim Programme other than to offer advice and support

Helen Akers – why did DX tweet out and ask swimmers to contact them directly

DRM – this was an error and the tweet has been removed.

Steve Layton – Has DX surveyed clubs across the County and asked them what they want from the Pathway as City of Derby and other clubs in the County feel they have the resources available to offer the same pathway level which is evident from the success that COD have had both at National and International level? COD have decided to withdraw from the pathway because of the level of coaching they can provide and also because they consider DX to be a rival.

DRM – a full survey has not been undertaken but softer communications methods have been applied which include meeting with clubs to find out their requirements and working with them going forward. While DX appreciate that COD and some of the large clubs do have an Elite pathway the majority of the clubs in Deryshire do not and this is where DX can offer their support.

Steve Layton – should DX consider changing the pathway to support coach development as opposed to taking talent from clubs across the County?

JM – Helen's role is to develop coaches and DX are working closely with the development programme to support this structure

Liz Demspey – Some of the clubs are concerned about DX overlapping the training that they can offer for example swimmers of an younger age 10/11 years who may be performing now at a successful level but in years to come may not be able to sustain this long term due to growth etc. Does there need to be a review of the current pathway to see if it meets the needs of the County?

JM – DX supports 10 and 11 years because they can offer clubs additional pool time and also support around stroke and skills to build on their current talent.

Corine O'Neill – when swimmers move to DX the home club feels as if the swimmer has left the club because there is very little if no feedback. This makes it difficult for the home club coaches to continue a training regime with the swimmer. Often the swimmer also leaves the home club as an excellent backstroke swimmer and when returning this has completely changed

JM – DX will work across all 4 strokes with the swimmer to improve their skills and build on the work undertaken with their home club. It was accepted that communication needs to improve and the coaches at DX will work on this

Mark Tanner – why does DX believe that a home club cannot provide the best level of training to 10 and 11 year olds?

JM – offering a performance pathway to 10 and 11 year olds fits into Swim England's performance model. DX are not saying that clubs cannot offer the correct level of training but want to enhance the training and offer additional support

Richard Burton – Smaller clubs welcome the support that DX can offer as it provides support for additional pooltime which is something that the smaller clubs struggle to acquire

Siobhan Morton – over the last 12 months Long Eaton have raised concern because they feel that DX are focusing solely on the younger swimmers and dismissing those who are in the older bracket but clearly have the talent and maturity to succeed?

JM – meetings have taken place recently with Spencer George, Head Coach for Long Eaton to discuss the club's concerns and to ensure all talent is captured

Mandy Bell – how does DX determine how many hours a 10/11 year swimmer should be completing in the pool and why does DX feel that other clubs in the County cannot provide this level of pool time or coaching to this age group?

The pathway offered to each club is individual and based on the clubs needs across the County. It is accepted that some clubs will have enough pooltime and coaches to provide a full package of training to this age group, however, other clubs cannot.

Alex Phillips – Home clubs see their role as feeders into the Performance Pathway offered by DX. Should DX be offering this call up to all age group?

JM – DX coaches only gain a snap shot from seeing swimmers perform at galas and championships and on rankings. Communication has to be two way and home coaches have to take responsibility and liaise with DX so that any swimmer who has the required talent can access the pathway.

Tom Parr – what is the current ratio between North and South DX squads? As two major clubs have pulled out from the pathway do DX feel the need to take more swimmers from the smaller clubs to fulfil their financial plan?

JM – the North can currently take a capacity of 12 fulltime swimmers into the Development Squad. The numbers for the South have not been established as the programme is still in development.

DRM – Intake does not centre around a financial plan as such, entrance is based on talent and current pool/coach capacity

Tracie Ward – As County Welfare Officer such early age intake (10 to 11 years) should be reviewed. Three clubs have already approached her raising concern about the young age intake.

JM – not all swimmers accept invitations to train with DX, currently the acceptance level is 80/20 in favour. It is the parents who need to be considering if additional training sessions are appropriate. Some swimmers do decide that the training is not for them and will return back to their home clubs on their previous training regimes.

Claire Cotton - My daughter swims early in the DX pathway and enjoys the balance between her club and dx. It should be the swimmers choice when they swim and who they swim with.

7) Summary

Doug Whitlam brought the meeting to a close following receipt of all questions.

The discussions centred around 3 key themes:

- 10 to 11 year old swimmers entering the pathway
- Communication channels between DX and home clubs
- The need for a coaches forum across the County so that issues and concerns can be raised and discussed

It was agreed that DASA would meet to discuss the outcome of the comments from the OGM and conduct an exercise to establish what clubs across the County now want from the pathway.

8) Action

DASA to conduct a survey across the County to establish what the clubs are looking for from the process

Helen Bickerstaff to create a Coaches Forum to establish and maintain effective coach communication channels across the County

9) Thank You

Doug Whitlam thanked everyone for their contributions, questions and openness.

Steve Layton thanked DX for their presentation and DASA for arranging the OGM.

10) Date of next meeting:

The AGM will take place on the 23rd June 2019 from 1pm at the Genesis Centre, Alfreton

**Sharon Llewellyn
Secretary**

Foot Note: These notes are not a vabatum record of the discussions that took place