

Scottish Rowing Board Meeting

Public Minutes

22 January 2026 | 6.30 pm | Online via Zoom

Published Board Minutes

Chair: Laura Graham, Chair and Coaching Director

Board members and officers: Mike Martin (President); Laura Graham (Chair / Coaching Director); Sophie McCall (Development Director); Ian Munro (Performance Director); Alastair Clarkson (Finance Director); Jonny Logan (Commercial Director); Fiona Armit (Safeguarding Director); Robert Gordon (Ordinary Director); Fiona Rennie (Ordinary Director); and Lee Boucher (Chief Executive).

Also in attendance: Mark Senter (Outreach and Inclusion Manager and Lead Wellbeing and Protection Officer); Gillian Stewart (Head of Operations); Adam Martin (Head of Development and Coaching); David Johnson (Management Accountant); Charlotte MacBeath (sportscotland Partnership Manager); and Dominic McGrory (Young People's Panel Director).

Apologies: None.

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed attendees. Adam Martin was introduced as Scottish Rowing's new Head of Development and Coaching. No apologies were received.

2. Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

4. Matters Arising

The Board reviewed progress against outstanding actions. It supported a revised programme of policy review, prioritising overdue and organisationally important policies, with updated policies to be submitted to the Board for approval. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy was identified as an early priority. Further work was also planned on centralised Board training, crisis management, governance audit actions, a cash reserves policy and commercial opportunities. Consideration of charitable status was deferred pending Finance and Risk Committee review and a recommendation to the Board. The Board also noted the remaining Raymond Dixon Fund balance and the need to consider its longer-term sustainability. Completed actions would continue to be closed through the action-tracking process.

5. Membership and Governance Review

5.1 Principles and Intended Outcomes Paper

The Board considered a proposed Membership and Governance Review intended to examine membership value, fee sustainability, governance arrangements and actions arising from the governance audit and sportscotland framework. The Board highlighted the need for a clear scope, structure and timetable, and for the review to recognise that membership fees could increase or decrease. The Board approved in principle that the Chief

Executive should proceed, using the agreed principles and intended outcomes to develop detailed Terms of Reference and establish a working group. Further comments were invited within the next week before the document was finalised.

6. Development and Coaching Committee Items

6.1 Development and Coaching Report

The Board received an initial report from the new Head of Development and Coaching. It considered club engagement, event development, coach education and the financial sustainability of Scottish Rowing events. The Board emphasised that events should aim at least to break even, while recognising that shared costs may be allocated across the events programme. Event-survey findings will be shared with clubs, and work will continue on a more structured coach-education offer and year-round training calendar.

7. Performance Advisory Group Items

7.1 Performance Report

The Board received an update on athlete selections, university partnerships, funding and recruitment to a revised performance coaching role. The Performance Advisory Group was finalising selection policies and reviewing how future meetings could allow greater focus on strategy and programme development. It was agreed that relevant sportscotland correspondence concerning the distribution of awards would be shared with the Performance Director for review.

8. Young People's Panel Items

8.1 Young People's Panel Report

The Board received a report on the Young People's Panel, which gives young people a structured role in Scottish Rowing's decision-making and engagement. Its work was organised through inclusion, events and communications groups, with current priorities including reducing barriers to participation, broadening the experience of rowing, strengthening youth-led communication and ensuring continuity between panel cohorts. Future recruitment is intended to broaden age and geographic representation. The Board welcomed the Panel's progress and agreed that links between the Panel and Scottish Rowing staff should be strengthened so that youth-led ideas connect effectively with operational work.

9. Finance and Risk Committee Items

9.1 Monthly Finance Report (to end of October)

The Board reviewed management accounts for the seven months to October. Income was slightly ahead of budget, supported by membership, competition and pathway income, while direct event costs were above budget. Overall performance was better than budget at that point, although part of the variance arose from timing and the different treatment of staffing and professional-support costs rather than a permanent saving.

9.2 Revised Budget Forecast

The Board reviewed the full-year forecast, which remained close to the revised figures circulated in December 2025 and approximately £4,000 better than the original budget. Despite this improvement, a deficit was still forecast and was not considered sustainable longer-term. The Board approved the revised budget and emphasised the need to avoid carrying a deficit into 2026–27. Management will continue work towards a break-even budget for the following year.

9.3 Finance and Risk Committee Terms of Reference

The Board approved revised Terms of Reference for the Finance and Risk Committee. These formalise the Committee's responsibility for reviewing membership fee proposals and making recommendations to the Board.

9.4 Risk Appetite Statements (Revised)

The Board approved revised risk appetite statements. Most changes updated risk ownership; the risk appetite for environmental and social responsibility changed from "Alert" to "Mitigate". The Finance and Risk Committee will review the risk register quarterly.

9.5 Review of Finance and Risk Committee Performance

The Board agreed with the Committee's conclusion that it had met its objectives effectively during the year. Recommended improvement actions were in progress, while the Committee recorded its disappointment that a solution to the current-year deficit had not yet been identified.

9.6 Regatta Seat Fee Proposal

The Board considered indicative increases to seat fees for the Spring Regatta and Scottish Championships, including affordability, event costs, the effect of venue refurbishment and the need for events to make a positive financial contribution. No final decision was taken. Management was asked to prepare revised options, including alternative fee structures and possible different treatment of race formats, for further Board consideration. Member engagement on event arrangements was expected to continue.

9.7 Finance and Risk Committee Update

The Committee also reported progress on commercial planning, approved limited investigative expenditure relating to the Scottish Rowing Centre building, and reinforced the need for events to break even. The Board noted that most risks remained within appetite, with financial and wellbeing and protection risks continuing to receive active oversight.

The Board noted that there had been no risk events since its previous meeting.

The Board noted that Ken McCracken, Scottish Rowing's long-standing accountant at JRD, sadly passed away shortly before Christmas. LB noted that Ken had been a trusted colleague and friend to Scottish Rowing, always going above and beyond in his support. LB expressed condolences on behalf of the organisation to Ken's family and to his colleagues at JRD.

10. Operational Reports

10.1 Chief Executive's Report

The Board received an operational update covering staffing and recruitment, wellbeing and protection assurance, external funding developments, Scottish Rowing Centre access and redevelopment, Glasgow boathouse arrangements, funding applications and the strategic use of facilities.

Scottish Rowing remained compliant with the Standard for Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport, and an independent organisational wellbeing and protection review was due to begin in February. The Board noted potential opportunities arising from public investment in sport, subject to approval and allocation decisions. Discussions with North Lanarkshire Council concerning access, lease arrangements and the future sustainability of the Scottish Rowing Centre were continuing. The Board also noted arrangements being developed for clubs affected by the planned demolition of the East Boathouse, and plans to decommission the rowing tank and

explore alternative use of the space. Several matters remained under development or depended on third-party decisions.

10.2 Wellbeing and Protection Report

The Board received an organisational wellbeing and protection update. The commissioned independent review had entered its information-gathering stage which was likely to include engagement with the Board and clubs. Work was also under way to align umpire onboarding with Scottish Rowing's existing standards framework, including an assessment of the appropriate safeguarding requirements. A formal proposal will be brought to the Board when this work is complete.

10.3 Annual Membership Report

The Board reviewed membership and participation data for 2025–26. Verified JustGo membership increased from 1,440 to 1,718, while club-return figures decreased from 2,535 to 2,244; the Board noted that differences in data quality and changes to the club-return process limited direct comparison. The proportion of club members directly registered through JustGo increased, gender balance remained broadly even, and coastal events had widened geographic reach. The Board also noted that equality information is optional and that small-number data must be interpreted cautiously. Scottish Rowing will review data-collection processes and use improved datasets to support future governance, funding and development decisions. The report will be circulated to the Board for further review.

11. Strategic Plan 2026 – Launch Plans

The Board received an update on the new Scottish Rowing strategy. Initial feedback from sportscotland had been broadly positive, and a public launch was planned for the beginning of March. Club presidents had been invited to a preview session as part of a wider approach to member engagement. Scottish Rowing also intended to produce accessible communications, supported by the Young People's Panel, and to share the research arising from club consultation. A three-year delivery plan and annual operational plans were being developed to support implementation and Board scrutiny.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Board Meeting Dates 2026

Proposed dates for the remaining 2026 Board meetings would be circulated to confirm availability.