

Laser Swimming Club

Constitution

March 2012

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1 List of Terms and Abbreviations

- SI** – Swim Ireland
- CRSI**- Swim Ireland (Connacht Region),
- DP** – Designated Person
- AGM** – Annual General Meeting
- EGM** – Extraordinary General Meeting
- CCO** – Club Children’s Officer
- Officer** – Officers of a club are the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.
- Executive Committee** – This is the body elected by the Members for the management of the business and affairs of the club.
- Leader** – This is any person, whether paid or unpaid, who is responsible for those participating in the aquatic disciplines; roles include but not limited to supervisor, team manager, sports science personnel, chaperone, helpers, committee members, tutors, coaches and teachers.

This constitution was ratified at an extraordinary general meeting (EGM) of Laser Swimming Club held on 12 March 2012 and is effective from that date.

2 Club Details

- 2.1 The name of the club shall be Laser Swimming Club.
- 2.2 It will be registered with the National Body of Swimming, namely “Swim Ireland”, (S.I.).
- 2.3 The Club shall be affiliated to Connacht Region Swim Ireland (C.R.S.I.).
- 2.4 It will abide by the rules set out by S.I.
- 2.5 It may from time to time alter or change rules in conjunction with S.I. to improve the running of the club.
- 2.6 It will include in its rule book and its codes of ethics, guidelines for all officials and members regarding complaints, be they for child abuse or otherwise.
- 2.7 A copy of the club constitution, club rules and club codes of ethics will be available to all members on request to the secretary of the Laser Swimming Club.
- 2.8 All rules and responsibilities are subject to review at the A.G.M.
- 2.9 The club colours shall be Navy Blue and Sky Blue.
- 2.10 The headquarters of the club shall be Leisureland, Salthill, Galway.

3 Objectives

- 3.1 The objectives of the club are:
 - 3.1.1 To teach swimming to children from the age of four upwards in a safe, supportive and friendly environment,
 - 3.1.2 To teach, prepare and coach swimmers to compete at their optimum ability to the highest levels locally, nationally and internationally,
 - 3.1.3 To promote the teaching/coaching and practice of swimming in line with current best practice.
 - 3.1.4 To promote the development of physical, moral and social qualities associated with sport, within the participants.
 - 3.1.5 To accept and enforce the rules and regulations set down by Swim Ireland regarding swimming in accordance with the affiliation status afforded to the club.
 - 3.1.6 To provide a positive and safe environment for all its members and staff.
 - 3.1.7 To ensure sport for young people in the club is fun, and conducted in an encouraging atmosphere in line with Swim Ireland guidelines and best practice.
 - 3.1.8 To provide equal opportunities whenever possible for successful participation, irrespective of ability or disability, so as individuals can be involved in sports activities in an integrated and inclusive way.
- 3.2 Laser Swimming Club is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of its members. Every individual in Laser Swimming Club should, at all times, show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare and those of others, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of Laser Swimming Club and the guidelines contained in the “Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport” and the ‘Swim Ireland Guidelines for Safeguarding Children’ or most up-to-date equivalent.

4 Affiliation

4.1 By virtue of the affiliation of Laser Swimming Club to Swim Ireland, its members acknowledge that they are subject to the laws, rules and constitutions of:

- i) Swim Ireland, the governing body for the whole of the island of Ireland.
- ii) Ligue Européenne de Natation (LEN), the European governing body for the aquatics.
- iii) Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA), the world governing body for the aquatics.

5 Membership

5.1 All members are subject to the rules and constitution of Laser Swimming Club and rules and regulations of the Connacht Region (CRSI), Swim Ireland, LEN and FINA.

5.2 The following constitute as Members of the club:

- i) Competitor – Members of Laser Swimming Club who decide to engage in competitive events.
- ii) Non-Competitor – This category includes but is not limited to: participants who wish to train but not compete; coaches; administrators; aquatics leaders; and CCOs.

5.3 The Club Executive Committee reserves the right to accept or reject applications for membership of the club. If they are refused, the applicant must be notified by the Executive Committee in writing as to the reasons for their refusal.

5.4 Application Procedures for Club Members

5.4.1 All members and officials must complete the necessary application forms and attach the necessary fees as set down by Swim Ireland and Laser Swimming Club.

5.4.2 They must also be familiar with and comply with the Swim Ireland and Laser Swimming Club rules, and read and sign the Swim Ireland and Laser Swimming Club Codes of Conduct.

5.4.3 These forms must then be forwarded to the Executive Committee for approval. Those under 18 must have their parent(s) / guardian(s) sign the necessary application forms.

5.4.4 Upon acceptance, the member will then be provided with a copy of the Constitution and Rules of Laser Swimming Club

5.4.5 A member who wishes to resign as a member of the club must inform the secretary in writing. No refund of subscription monies will be paid upon resignation from the club.

5.4.6 Full membership status is only valid where a subscription has been paid in full or in a manner agreed by the Club Executive Committee.

5.4.7 Members will be required to renew their membership with Laser Swimming Club and Swim Ireland on an annual basis.

5.5 Annual Subscriptions

5.5.1 Club fees and payment dates will be determined by the Executive Committee.

5.5.2 A member may resign by communicating this in writing or verbally to the Club Secretary, and if this persons wishes to renew membership at a later date they must re-apply.

5.6 Learn to Swim

Laser Swimming Club wishes to promote participants to learn to swim. Laser Swimming Club will run learn to swim classes.

6 Club Management

6.1 Membership of the Executive Committee

Membership of the Executive Committee shall consist of the following: - A Chairperson, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and at least four other adult members to be elected at an Annual General Meeting. The Chairperson shall have a casting vote. The outgoing Chairperson shall be ex-officio a member of the committee,

Laser Swimming Club shall have a Designated Person whose duty is to report any allegations of child abuse to the statutory body. This individual can be any member of the Executive Committee although it is recommended that it is an officer. A Club Children's Officer must also be nominated who will have access to the Executive Committee, and its meeting, but not be a member of it.

6.2 Subcommittees

The Executive Committee may appoint sub-committees from time to time as necessary, drawing from the membership as required. All sub-committees are appointed by and will report into the executive committee,

6.3 Duties of the Chairperson

- i) To co-ordinate club activities.
- ii) To promote the interest of Laser Swimming Club at all times and act as the official spokesperson for the club.
- iii) To work in conjunction with Treasurer to manage club finances.
- iv) To ensure the principles of due process and natural justice are applied in all decisions made by the committee.
- v) To run meetings efficiently and ensure agenda is adhered to.
- vi) To maintain order and prevent unnecessary disruptions.

6.4 Duties of the Treasurer

- i) To keep a record of all financial transactions concerning Laser Swimming Club business.
- ii) To keep appropriate books of record on Laser Swimming Club business.
- iii) To identify all income received and all expenditures.
- iv) To act as co-signature on cheques along with the Chairperson/Secretary.
- v) To ensure fees and bills are paid, payments are receipted and recorded.
- vi) To produce reports of the club's financial position when required,

6.5 Duties of the Secretary

- i) To record the minutes of all committee and club meetings.
- ii) To keep records of membership, complaints and contracts regarding the dealings of the club. Records shall be kept for a minimum of 6 years.
- iii) To set out meetings including agenda details, notice period and any other necessary information.
- iv) To ensure that the club desk is staffed at teaching sessions,
- v) To deal with all club correspondence.

6.6 Other Committee Member(s)

All Committee members are responsible for the smooth day to day running of the Club. The Executive Committee can agree amongst themselves the additional roles required to be carried out by Committee Members.

The Executive Committee may appoint a committee member to take on public relations duties on behalf of the club.

The Executive Committee will appoint a committee member to take on the duties and responsibilities of the Designated Person as outlined in Section 7.3 of this constitution.

7 Child Welfare

7.1 Laser Swimming Club accepts and supports:

- i) The Child Protection Guidelines adopted by Swim Ireland, and
- ii) “The Code of Ethics and Good Practice in Children’s Sport in Ireland”.

7.2 Duties and Responsibilities of the Club Children’s Officer (CCO)

- i) The Club Children’s Officer shall be child centred in focus and have, as the primary aim, the establishment of a child centred ethos within Laser Swimming Club.
- ii) The CCO shall be the link between the children and adults in Laser Swimming Club.
- iii) The CCO shall take responsibility for monitoring and reporting to Laser Swimming Club Executive Committee on how club policy impacts on young people and their Sports Leaders.
- iv) The CCO shall be familiar with the Code of Ethics and Child Welfare Guidelines of Swim Ireland.
- v) The CCO is not a member of the Committee but acts in an advisory capacity towards it, and must attend a minimum of 4 committee meetings a year to report and update the Committee regarding Child Welfare matters. They can attend all meetings if they so wish however.

7.3 Duties and Responsibilities of the Designated Person

- i) Any concerns or disclosures relating to child abuse shall be reported to the Designated Person (DP) who is responsible for reporting this to the statutory authorities.
- ii) The Designated Person shall be familiar with the Code of Ethics and Child Welfare Guidelines of Swim Ireland.
- iii) The Designated Person shall be a member of the Committee, with this individual acting in a dual role capacity, performing both their existing role in conjunction with that of Designated Person.

8 Coaches / Teaching Staff

- 8.1 The duties and responsibilities of the coaching and teaching staff will comply with the guidelines set out in ‘Swim Ireland Guidelines for Safeguarding Children’ or most recent edition.
- 8.2 The recruitment procedures of any individual engaged or working under the Laser Swimming Club, shall be in accordance with ‘Swim Ireland Guidelines for Safeguarding Children’, the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996, the Terms of Employment Act 1994 (ROI) and all other related recruitment legislation. Information relating to the responsibilities of the roles, duties and the level of experience/qualifications shall be indicated in the recruitment process.
- 8.3 All coaching details are the ultimate responsibility of the Head Coach. These duties are as follows
- Training content
 - Training schedule
 - Team selection (relays)
 - Appropriating competitive swimmers into respective groups according to their ability
 - To report to and act as liaison to Swim Ireland HQ.
- 8.4 All teaching staff will undergo a police vetting (Garda Siochana, PSNI, and Swim Ireland) in accordance with ‘Swim Ireland Guidelines for Safeguarding Children’ or most recent edition. If the applicant is from a jurisdiction outside Ireland, enquiries will be made to the relevant statutory bodies.
- 8.5 Coaches and teachers shall not hold a management or elected position on the Club Committee where working as a coach or teacher for more than three hours a week.

- 8.6 The Head Coach shall be accountable to the Committee and shall be entitled to attend any Committee meeting. A minimum attendance is also required of 4 meetings per year, effectively one per quarter, of the coach at Committee meetings.
- 8.7 All Coaches and Leaders must be affiliated to Swim Ireland, and must possess the requisite qualifications.

9 Executive Committee

- 9.1 The Executive Committee shall be empowered to introduce rules, as the need arises, for the general regulation of the club. No rule shall be inconsistent with anything contained in this constitution. The Executive Committee must ensure a Club's Rule Book is in place which is made available to all members.
- 9.2 The Committee has the power to appoint such sub-committees as they may consider necessary. These sub-committees will act on behalf of the Executive Committee and follow procedures and relay information as directed by the Executive Committee.
- 9.3 The Executive Committee shall be responsible for all assets of the club.
- 9.4 The Executive Committee, in conjunction with the CCO, will be responsible for formulating Club policy in accordance with the 'Swim Ireland Guidelines for Safeguarding Children 2008, or most recent edition, and on the direction the Club takes in the future in all its activities.
- 9.5 The members of the Executive Committee shall be indemnified by the members of the club against all liabilities properly incurred by them in the management affairs of the club.

- 9.6 Committee members must declare any personal or business interest, which may conflict with their duties as a member of the Executive Committee. Such a declaration may be discussed with the other Committee members at a designated meeting, and they may be required to absent themselves during specific discussions and decisions.
- 9.7 The Executive Committee will be expected to follow codes of conduct in relation to their obligations to Laser Swimming Club members. These include, but are not limited to, confidentiality, objectivity, loyalty, fairness and a constant awareness of their obligations to Laser Swimming Club and its members. The Committee will familiarise itself with the ‘Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport’ and fulfil the duties required in the *Code of Conduct for Club Committees* section (p.25) of the ‘Swim Ireland Guidelines for Safeguarding Children 2008’, or the most recent equivalent.. The Committee will also adhere to any updated versions of these policy documents which are issued in the future.

10 Meetings of the Executive Committee

- 10.1 The Committee shall *meet at least 4 times per year* with a minimum quorum of 50% plus 1 of the members of the committee present.
- 10.2 The Chairperson and the Secretary shall have discretion to call further meetings of the Committee if they consider it to be in the interests of the Laser Swimming Club.
- 10.3 A minimum of 7 days notice will be given to members of the committee save with exceptional circumstances. The Executive Committee shall agree how notice shall be provided whether this is phone, email and so forth.
- 10.4 The Committee should set out its agenda for a meeting no less than 2 days prior to the meetings.
- 10.5 The Chairperson has the casting vote on any motion arising during the meetings.
- 10.6 The Chairperson's decision on a Point of Order is final
- 10.7 The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings.
- 10.8 The Secretary, or in her/his absence a member of the Committee, shall take minutes.
- 10.9 The Treasurer shall relay the financial position of the club at each meeting.
- 10.10 The other Committee members must also relay details on the areas of the club they are designated too.
- 10.11 The CCO, Coaching and Teaching staff must also be given the opportunity to report and voice the concerns of their designated areas within the Club, as well as to advise the Executive Committee on relevant issues.

11 Voting Rights at General Meetings

- 11.1 Members who are fully paid up and over 16 years of age are eligible to vote.
- 11.2 No voting by proxy is allowed.
- 11.3 Parents shall hold one vote on behalf of their child/children within the club. Only one parent may exercise this vote and this must be so agreed between the parents (that is one vote only and not one vote per child). Parents who are club members in their own right may vote with this right for themselves and also cast one vote on behalf of their child/children
- 11.4 Voting shall be conducted via a show of hands, which will be counted by the Secretary. The Committee may, however, recommend that a vote should be held in a secret ballot format owing to the context of the vote.
- 11.5 No business shall be transacted at a general meeting unless a quorum is present. A quorum of 10 members of the eligible voting members is the number required. If this quorum is not fulfilled the General Meeting can be suspended for exactly one week.
- 11.6 Nominations will be passed at AGMs by simple resolution of 50% plus one.
- 11.7 Motions for a change to the Laser Swimming Club Constitution must be passed by a special resolution of 75% of persons present at the meeting entitled to vote.
- 11.8 The Chairperson will have a casting vote if there is an equality of votes.

12 Election of the Committee Members

- 12.1 Election of the Executive Committee members takes place at the Club AGM each year. At this time a Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary along with at least four other members of the Executive Committee shall be elected.
- 12.2 An officer of the club may stand for re-election to that office for four consecutive years. After this time period is up, eligibility for re-election to that office is revoked for a period of two years.
- 12.3 Nominations for office and Notice of Motions must be received in writing by the Secretary no less than 7 days prior to the General Meeting.
- 12.4 A proposer and seconder are required for all Nominations and Notice of Motions.
- 12.5 Nominations for the Executive Committee and Notices of Motion shall be available on request from the Secretary. Nominations and Motions without due notice will not be discussed.
- 12.6 In the event that no nominations are received by the Secretary, only then may a nomination from the floor at the AGM take place.
- 12.7 A Club Children's Officer must be appointed by the Executive Committee and fulfil the criteria laid down by the 'Swim Ireland Guidelines for Safeguarding Children', or most recent equivalent. The Club's DP will also be appointed by the Executive Committee from within.

13 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

- 13.1 Members shall be informed of the date, time, place and order of business of the AGM at least 21 days prior to the meeting. This information shall be posted on the club notice board.
- 13.2 The Executive Committee must decide when the AGM is held each year.
- 13.3 The Committee shall distribute to Members its report and statement of accounts for the relevant financial year, not less than 14 days before the date fixed for holding the AGM.
- 13.4 At this meeting, the Annual Report shall be presented, which shall consist of a: Chairman's Report; Secretary's Report; Treasurer's Report; Coaches' Report and the CCO's report.
- 13.5 Any changes or updates to the Club Constitution or Club Rules or Codes of Ethics will be notified to the members within 14 days following the AGM. Any obligations to inform CRSI and/or SI will also be addressed.
- 13.6 Any resolution to amend the Club's Constitution which is successful at the General Meeting will come into immediate affect upon conclusion of the General Meeting.
- 13.7 Two delegates for the club will be elected to represent the club at the Swim Ireland AGM.

14 Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)

An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called at any time once two thirds of the Committee resolve to convene such a meeting. It can also be called within 7 days of the Secretary receiving a requisition in writing signed by 50% plus 1 of the voting members.

15 Transfers

If a member wishes to leave a club and join another they must follow the rules set down by Swim Ireland. All members must have paid any outstanding subscriptions before they will be released by the Club save with exceptional circumstances.

16 Finance

- 16.1 The financial year will run from 1 September to 31 August the following year.
- 16.2 The financial affairs of the club shall be the responsibility of the Executive Committee in general and in particular, the Treasurer. Correct accounts and book keeping shall be done by Treasurer or under his/her supervision.
- 16.3 Annual Accounts of Laser Swimming Club should be prepared for the Annual General Meeting by Laser Swimming Club Treasurer.
- 16.4 The Executive Committee shall be empowered to open Bank Accounts in the name of Laser Swimming Club and all transactions in these accounts shall be authorized by the Executive Committee. All cheques, drafts and so forth shall be signed by the Treasurer and either the Chairperson or Secretary.
- 16.5 The Treasurer will receive all money paid to the Laser Swimming Club and ensure all such sums are lodged to Laser Swimming Club bank account as soon as possible.
- 16.6 Any assets invested in by the Executive Committee will be used for Laser Swimming Club purposes only. The Executive Committee will delegate the use of these assets under advisement from coaches, teachers, club children's officers and others within the Laser Swimming Club.

16.7 The Committee will have the power to negotiate sponsorships on behalf of Laser Swimming Club and engage from time to time in fundraising activities. Any financial returns from these activities will be used for Laser Swimming Club purposes only.

17 Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

Laser Swimming Club will deal with complaints as laid out in Swim Ireland's Complaints and Disciplinary Rules Procedures (January 2012), and shall adopt SI procedures in this regard. Any issue involving members under 18 must also be brought to the attention of the CCO.

18 Cessation/Suspension/Expulsion of Membership

18.1 Laser Swimming Club has the power to terminate and suspend membership owing, but not limited to, violation of the constitution and/or rules, criminal behaviour or any activity deemed unseemly by the Executive Committee. All club terminations and suspensions will be reported to Swim Ireland, and can be also appealed to SI.

18.2 Suspension or termination of an individual's membership to Swim Ireland can only be done by Swim Ireland's board. These procedures are laid out in the 'Articles of Association of Swim Ireland'.

19 Dissolution

19.1 Laser Swimming Club may be dissolved:

- a. By a Resolution passed owing to the inactivity of its members. This Resolution would be passed at an EGM, specifically called for that purpose and carried by three quarters of the members present.
- b. A Court Order where a dispute exists within its membership.

19.2 Notice must be given to members and Swim Ireland for any Dissolution to come into affect, owing to a Resolution at a General Meeting.

19.3 All aspects of the Club, having discharged debts and liabilities, shall be distributed to a charity, charities or other non-profit making organization having an agenda similar to those of Laser Swimming Club or SI.

19.4 The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the winding up of assets and liabilities of Laser Swimming Club.

20 Equality

In accordance with the Equal Status Act 2000 – 2004 and the Equality Act 1996 in Northern Ireland, Laser Swimming Club will not discriminate against any persons or visitors within Laser Swimming Club. No discrimination of any kind against employed and voluntary staff, membership applications, members and individuals within the general public, will be tolerated.

21 Criminal Allegations

Laser Swimming Club shall treat allegations of criminal activity very seriously. Any allegation of a criminal offence will be reported to Swim Ireland and the appropriate policing body.

22 Data Protection

Laser Swimming Club shall aim to follow the necessary data protection guidelines set down by the relevant bodies.