

## Terms of Reference - Independent Wellbeing and Protection Review (Scottish Rowing)



### General

- Scottish Rowing (SR) is the governing body for rowing in Scotland, recognised by **sportscotland**. SR works closely with British Rowing (BR) as the home country national governing body for Scotland. SR retains autonomy over its structure and governance and for the development and management of rowing in Scotland. This includes jurisdiction for wellbeing and protection matters within Scotland including responding to wellbeing and protection concerns, case management and any associated disciplinary processes.
- SR is committed to adopting best practice in wellbeing and protection within sport and regularly reviews its approach.
- Scottish Rowing (the 'Commissioning Body') is now commissioning an independent review with the aim of assessing its policies, practices and culture to ensure they effectively protect all involved in our support from harm and meet best-practice standards.

### Background

SR has had an increasing number of wellbeing and protection (safeguarding) concerns in recent years. As a small governing body, with primarily amateur member clubs, this has taken up a significant amount of staff and volunteer time and financial resource. As some of these cases move towards a conclusion it is appropriate that we learn any lessons and complete a full wellbeing and protection review to ensure our processes and procedures are fit for purpose in the current age.

This review also reflects the wider context in which Scottish Rowing operates. Across the UK sports sector, there is an increasing expectation that governing bodies demonstrate robust, transparent and proactive approaches to wellbeing and protection. By commissioning this independent review, SR seeks not only to learn from recent cases but also to benchmark its systems and culture against recognised best practice, ensuring that the organisation continues to meet its duty of care to all participants and maintains the trust of members, partners and the public.

### The Reviewer

The Reviewer (agreed by SR) will:

- a) work to these Terms of Reference
- b) provide regular updates to the Commissioning Body;
- c) ensure the confidentiality of individuals who are subject to or have raised wellbeing and protection concerns is respected;
- d) from time to time, and with the agreement of the Commissioning Body, engage additional expert assistance as required; and
- e) produce a final report (the Report) containing both the findings and recommendations to be considered by SR. The Report shall be provided to the Commissioning Body.

### Commissioning Body

The Commissioning Body will:

- a) fully co-operate with the Review and provide all information and access required by the Reviewer;
- b) request that all affiliated clubs, members and relevant volunteers fully co-operate with the Review, including providing information and documentation as required, and making themselves available for interview or discussion where appropriate;
- c) appoint a commissioning panel, with both SR and independent representation, to meet with and support the Reviewer and discuss the final report prior to completion;
- d) provide progress updates to the SR Board at their request; and
- e) assess each recommendation in terms of feasibility, priority, resource implications, and shall report publicly on which recommendations it will implement, by when, and if any are not accepted, the reasons why.

### Purpose/Objectives

The overriding purpose of the review is to ensure the wellbeing and protection of all those involved in SR is paramount and is designed to:

- Assess the effectiveness of the existing wellbeing and protection governance structure (roles, responsibilities, oversight) within SR, affiliated clubs, performance pathways, and any other relevant levels.
- Evaluate how wellbeing and protection is experienced in practice: the culture, whether all involved in the sport feel safe, whether there are barriers to raising concerns and whether the organisation listens and acts.
- Audit a sample of recent/historical wellbeing and protection cases to check compliance with policy, timeliness, fairness, outcomes, learning and follow-up.
- Identify gaps, risks, strengths, and areas for improvement including aspects relating to prevention, reporting of concerns, case management, resourcing, training and oversight.
- Review communications and awareness-raising: how policies are communicated, how training is delivered, how people are informed about how to report concerns.
- Make clear, actionable recommendations for improvements in respect of the above areas.

### Scope

- The review will cover all of SR's performance programmes, clubs and national processes, to ensure best practice is embedded and assured across all aspects of the sport.

- The review should focus on the current processes and procedures and how these are applied in practice. It should also retrospectively consider historical cases managed within SR to identify any relevant learnings and opportunities for improvement.
- SR has 28 affiliated clubs. Each club will be asked to participate and a representative cross section of clubs will be individually reviewed to identify any common themes.
- The review will incorporate an analysis of SR's wellbeing and protection documentation as the basis for initial consideration of the aspects to be reviewed. All relevant documents will be provided to the review, (draft list below) as well as any further documents requested by the reviewer.
- The review will consider all forms of abuse, particularly emotional abuse and all types of physical and sexual abuse, to ensure that the review is appropriately comprehensive and wide-ranging.
- The review should specifically consider / assess the following aspects as they relate to wellbeing and protection:
  - the current structures and procedures in place, assessing whether there are any gaps, recommended improvements or changes to make in relation to participant wellbeing and protection at club and national level.
  - the development of wellbeing and protection systems and resources within SR over recent years and the effectiveness of these changes on participant wellbeing and protection.
  - drawing on the findings from the cross section of clubs reviewed, the nature and extent to a culture of wellbeing and protection is embedded within club culture and environments.
  - the nature and effectiveness of individual roles at club and national level in promoting and embedding wellbeing and protection with consideration to include coaches, umpires, board members/trustees, support staff and those with specific WPO responsibilities.
  - safe recruitment and selection of key staff and the level of wellbeing and protection consideration within these processes.
  - the adequacy and safety of the processes in place for participants / children and young people / parents / staff to report wellbeing and protection concerns without fear of retribution.
  - the provisions and practice in place to ensure fairness, transparency and support to all those involved in the management of a wellbeing and protection process once a concern is received.
  - an evaluation as to whether all individuals in the organisation receive training and education appropriate to their specific roles, ensuring that their relevant wellbeing and protection responsibilities are fully understood and exercised.
  - To assess whether all required systems, processes and resources are in place to support safe operational practice and well-informed decision-making during competitions, training sessions and related events.

- The review should incorporate insights from elite sport to understand how the performance arena operates within SR and assess whether wellbeing and protection and the duty of care toward participants at all levels of rowing are properly embedded.
- The review is not designed to consider or assess any specific wellbeing and protection concerns. In the event of any wellbeing and protection allegations or disclosures; these should be referred to the SR Lead Child Wellbeing and Protection Officer immediately. The reviewer will then liaise with the SR CWPO to agree on who will assume responsibility for any statutory referrals that may be required.
- The review is not a focused assessment of past or present personalities, competence and/or ability of coaches or other persons involved. However, the review should bear in mind that there can be structural and organisational weaknesses and separately there can be weaknesses and risk arising from both individuals' failure to follow procedures and/or their decision-making, in any given situation. The reviewer will report whether any gaps or weaknesses identified have arisen from either systemic / organisational issues or as a result of individual competence and compliance.

Initial documents to be provided:

- SR Strategic Plan
- SR most recent Performance Plan
- SR Performance Programme Athlete Feedback & Review
- SR Performance Handbooks
- CWP Policy, Procedures and Guidelines
- Adult Support and Protection Policy and Procedures
- Applicable corporate procedures
- Parent/athlete induction presentations
- Investigation Reports and witness statements to the extent necessary, anonymised.
- Safer recruiting procedures
- Any training documents
- Organisation structure/chart

#### Conduct of the Review

- The review will formally begin on 1 February 2026 and is expected to take no longer than six months to complete. An interim update will be provided during the review, with the final report anticipated later in 2026.
- Any suggested changes to TOR and timeline should be agreed with SR.
- All items should be treated confidentially and only disclosed to SR as part of this review.
- Should interviews be required, these may be facilitated by SR.

- Representation process (Maxwellisation). Where the Report makes critical findings which involve reference to specific individuals and the Reviewer wishes to consider offering Maxwellisation, the Reviewer shall raise with SR his thoughts as to the possibility of affording the opportunity to respond prior to completion through a robust and confidential Maxwellisation process.
- The review should provide an interim report and then a final report with its findings, recommendations and suggested actions for improvements that could be made to wellbeing and protection across the sport.
- The Reviewer shall ensure that all records, documents and other materials created, collected or processed during the course of the Review, whether in physical or electronic form, are stored securely in accordance with the requirements of GDPR. Upon completion of the Review (or any other agreed retention period), the Reviewer shall securely destroy or irreversibly delete all such records, unless retention is required by law, and shall certify in writing that such destruction/deletion has taken place.

#### Publication

The Commissioning Body reserves the right to publish a summary of the findings and recommendations of the Review. Similarly, the Commissioning Body reserves the right to publish these Terms of Reference on its website.

#### Confidentiality

The Commissioning Body and the Reviewer shall keep confidential all confidential information disclosed as a result of the Review and shall not use nor disclose the same save as provided for in these Terms of Reference or as required by law. The Reviewer shall ensure that all information provided via wellbeing and protection complaints and/or information which was subject to wellbeing and protection investigations is kept confidential and processed in accordance with best practice for such information. All parties shall only disclose such confidential information to those of their respective employees, consultants or agents who need to know it for the purposes of the Terms of Reference, provided that the recipient of such information is bound by obligations of confidentiality no less onerous than those provided herein and each party shall be responsible to the other in respect of any disclosure to such a person. The obligations of confidentiality shall not extend to any matter which is in or becomes part of the public domain.