**Head Coach Report – City of Leeds SSC**

**Sunday 24th June 2018**

**Sarah Speers (Stepping Down)**

In my final Head Coach report I wish to thank the committee for all their support and hard work over the past 6 years, and recognise their dedication to ensure the club continues to grow and provide high quality opportunities to all of its members.

I also wish to express to the coaching team my enormous gratitude for their support of the programme and its development, and particularly to Sue Barrington who has recently single handedly kept the programme running during the recruitment process for a new full time coach and been a huge asset to the club and training scheme.

I am delighted that Deanne Ward-Hopkins will now be stepping into the role of Head Coach for City of Leeds, having been an excellent judge, coach and member of the club for many years and wish her all the best in her new position.

A club is as strong as the people in it, and I feel confident that the fantastic committee, coaches and volunteers at City of Leeds will carry on progressing the club and sport to new heights.

For my final report I have conducted a SWOT analysis of the programme from my point of view as Head Coach and exiting committee member.

**Strengths**

* Large Membership base.
* Strong and active committee.
* Strong links to England Talent.
* High number of Level 2 coaches.
* Success at National Level.
* Sitting within Leeds City Council Training scheme structure.
* Strong position working towards the sustainable self-funding model.
* Strong presence with Seim England and Region has led to increased funding support.
* The ONLY programme in UK with support services: physiotherapy access and dedicated S&C coaching. Sports Psychology.

**Weaknesses**

* Pool hire on Sunday being heavily affected by Galas, external factors such as the pool being stuck at 25m and less NPLQ qualified staff has been a challenge, however options are being investigated by LCC to rectify this for future.
* Having more coaches at different levels and sites makes it harder to monitor progress of swimmers for grade day and competition entries.
* Some poorly attended stamina/land based sessions mean that the physical condition of younger swimmers particularly will be affected long term.
* Booking system for Physio needs reviewing and checking, and better communication with Head Coach. May be good idea to check and review times with Training Scheme Manager.
* Selection processes may need to be revisited and refined with committee and coaching team prior to NAGS. Should be less surprises for swimmers in a selection and development of ongoing feedback would help. Parental pressure of coaching team during selections has been a real challenge at times. It is impossible to keep all members happy.
* Large club means there is a rumour mill – more regular communication about changes where appropriate to reduce.

**Opportunities**

* Improve Sunday training access during gala periods.
* Develop relationship with physio.
* Improve complaints process for parents and coaches/committee – create a flow chart? Different between scheme and club issue made clearer and who to go to in different circumstances.
* Smooth out selection times and process to make it as clear as possible.
* Introduce internal coach development more regularly for members and re-establish coaching meetings to improve communication. Use bench mark testing and reward and recognition for physical elements) stamina and land based training in particular).
* Funding from Swim England – schools work and University clubs will increase membership and longevity of the sport for swimmers.
* Change to competition schedule means there is a greater opportunity to physically and technical develop swimmers in the pre-season.

**Threats**

* Challenge of the change to NAGs meaning that a fast change over and less swimmers at 12U NAGs level may affect athletes in close YOB. Urgent need to look at YOB of athletes and have a focused approach to ensuring swimmers coming through (perhaps a TID/fast track squad?)
* Funding – need to ensure LCC Synchro lessons and E-Squads expand (increasing pressure on Full tie and part time staff to meet funding and business plan KPI’s)
* Pressure on coaching staff/committee – complaints processes not being clear could lead to overwhelm.
* Increased financial pressure internally on LCC.

**Notable achievements from the past 12 months**

* 5 athletes in England Talent Squads: Emma Laycock, Tilly Budd, Isobel Davies, Daisy Rushton, Millicent Costello.
* Rebecca Richardson gained a full scholarship to study and train at Lindenwood University.
* New level 2 coaches in the club: Chloe McLelland, Georgia Fielding, Andrea Hubbard
* National Age Group success: 12U figures (Emma Laycock)
* British Championship Success: 5 medals in Combination team. Technical Solo, Technical Duet, Mixed duet Tech and Free. Millicent Costello highest overall scores and points.
* 2nd highest scoring club at the Combo Cup in Manchester
* Recruitment of new full time Head Coach- Deanne Ward-Hopkins