

Tuesday 16th March 2021

City of Oxford Swimming Club Professional Coaching staff,
c/o cosc.coachingteam@gmail.com

Mrs N. Brown
Chair,
City of Oxford SC
By e-mail

Dear Mrs Brown,

Written on behalf of all Professional Coaching staff of COSC

Further to your email sent at 21.30 on Friday 12th March 2021.

Can we remind you & colleagues, that all COSC staff wrote to you on the 7th March as a group & individually on the 8th March, specifying their position was to be represented by their professional Association, the BSCA, via Brian McGuinness.

We have met as a group & reiterate that this continues to be our position. His advice and the advice of the BSCA's legal support has been invaluable to us during this time.

Can we begin by thanking you and your colleagues for responding to Mr McGuinness' email of 9th March 2021, which was sent on our behalf, with our full knowledge and approval.

We have appreciated that you 'had' ceased incessantly emailing & calling them since that correspondence and that it has given them time to research & consider the behaviours by yourself and others which led to their correspondence of the 5th March 2021.

We are however, extremely disappointed that you have again ignored this express wish & request, that you do not contact us individually and do so via the email that we personally set up for such. We have copied the relevant Swim England staff into this correspondence as you referred to them in your mail to the Coaching staff individually on the 12th March 2021.

On the 9th March 2021, Mr McGuinness wrote on our behalf:

"The coaching team as a group have alerted you as their employers, through the official COSC Secretary, of their feelings of harassment by yourself and the Committee as a whole.

I officially on their behalf reinforce this group complaint of harassment by the Club Committee and as they have intimated, you as their employers are now contractually obliged to now address this health & safety grievance.

As an outcome, in the first instance, the Coaching Team of COSC expect you to appoint a wholly independent panel to investigate their concerns of harassment, with an outcome being that if their complaint is found to be substantiated, that as a group, you will step aside and an SGM be held with a new Committee formed.

Can we stress that by 'wholly independent' we mean a group appointed by the Regional or National Governing body, that this group agrees to – this is normal practice."

As a Coaching Team, we are aware that an SGM has now been called by other parties, and that will take its course. We are willing to wait for that to occur.

The investigation of the Coaching Teams concerns however, are a separate matter. The specific request to have said concerns investigated independently was due to our experiences with yourselves over a concerted period of time. It is these actions, over that time, on issues of great seriousness to our professional standing and personal wellbeing, that led to such. All five of us continue to be as one on that.

We wish all our concerns and relevant evidence, to be put to a wholly independent panel investigating these concerns. They are serious & they are substantiated. We do not however wish to have this investigation led by a panel which is being imposed upon us, given our recent experiences.

As Coaching Staff, we are well aware of the Grievance process as specified within the Club handbook; however, this is only a valid process if those involved can trust that all parties are following the process as specified and to the letter. Again, it is your own recent behaviours, which have led to this lack of trust.

Perhaps you should reflect upon that, before casting aspersions upon others. We note in your email to Mr McGuinness of 12th March, you made many personal remarks which we will not respond to, however if we can paraphrase one section, where you claim that he was acting “without any concern over any damage you may cause to the Club.....”.

On Friday 5th March 2021, as coaches we wrote to you as a Club Committee, highlighting that we felt you were harassing us, that this was affecting us professionally & personally, that it was affecting our health and personal wellbeing.

We at no time stated or threatened to withdraw our labour. We were, and still are, willing to continue to coach swimmers whilst this matter is resolved, as we are professional enough to differentiate ourselves as coaches working with swimmers from coaches with a serious grievance.

It was you as a Club Committee who despite the concerns raised, chose to continue to harass us as staff with emails and calls, making demands for individual meetings in short time, cancel sessions, remove us from WhatsApp groups and our permissions on SwimManager thus limiting our ability to communicate with members. You proceeded the same day to suspend all five of us and then write to parents with half-truths and inaccurate comments. We would suggest, all done “without any concern over any damage you may cause to the Club.....”. Unfortunately, we see that is still continuing with your recent correspondence to members.

For any process of mediation to work, there has to be mutual trust and respect on both sides. At present your actions, deeds & words do nothing to foster that with any of the coaching team.

By suspending us, you showed that you did not trust us to behave professionally when coaching swimmers and keep the matters separate; you have also shown you have no respect for our qualifications, experience, knowledge, achievements and standing in the swimming world, by constantly questioning our coaching proposals, silencing our coaching voice, undermining us by seeking advice from other coaches with less or no more knowledge, as well challenging our recommendations & actions for no good reason and then acting upon them unilaterally.

We as coaches are not the problem, we are the solution and as a first step we expect you to lift our suspension, allowing us to get back to our core duties without interference and of course saving the Club money, until the SGM is held and the outcome known. The members of COSC deserve that.

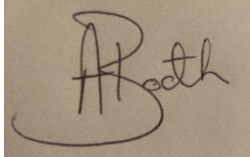
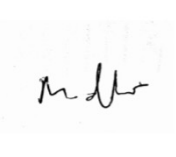



We are aware of telephone conversations being had which further seeks to besmirch our actions, reputations and standing, all while you continue to try to silence us. This gives grounds to counteract

this with public disclosure, including our reasons for taking the action that we have, stating your behaviours and malpractice.

None of what you have suggested will resolve the fundamental issues and it is clear that you are still not listening. This is about all five of us, not one disgruntled coach, please bear that in mind; the threat of five of us all leaving together remains. It is the potential outcome of the SGM which has stopped us from doing so to date.

Lift the suspension, let us back to coaching the swimming members of COSC and then let the SGM take its course.

Regards,

				
Amanda Booth	Mikey Hire	Matt Croyle	Fabian Whitbread	Zichen Liu

COSC Professional Coaching Staff