

Draft SUABC High Level Strategic Plan

Prepared by Gina Fusco

Interim Summaries Issued to Management Committee Dec, End Jan, April

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to Membership for AGM 15 May 2024

1.Strategy Development Background

With a growing club, a changing mix of members and finite resources the Management Committee have recognised the increasing need for a long-term plan. This would help to define the long-term direction of the club which in turn enables the club to create realistic goals, understanding priorities and build more robust short- and medium-term plans.

With member input and agreement of the strategic plan it is hoped that this would also create a sense of collaboration and collective responsibility and ultimately high member satisfaction.

The aim was to develop a draft high level club strategic plan to communicate to members for the AGM, seek feedback and input from the membership then finalise the plan. To create this initial draft, 3 workshops were held with members of the Management Committee and VCs (Appendix 1 for attendee list) to explore the following

1. Understand the current situation of the club
2. Start to develop long term aspirations for the club
3. Prioritise the stated long-term aspirations
4. Identify how we might achieve the top priority aspirations
5. Build a draft plan from the actions generated

Workshops were no more than 2 hours in duration, open, collaborative, supportive where constructive challenge and debate was encouraged.

Inputs during the process included were the Membership breakdown, Club wide Member survey feedback, Adaptive survey feedback, financial review, Current legal structure, existing code of conduct & stated values.

Summaries of each Workshop were issued to Management Committee and all attendees for comment and review. This document pulls all the outputs together into one Draft Strategic Plan.

2.Current Situation for the Club

The club has a lot of very positive attributes shown in the following statements

SUABC is a friendly, welcoming, and supportive club and provides enjoyment, fun and friendship for members

Members are loyal and we know many have been members for 6+ years

Offers membership to a wide variety of rowers including recreational, adaptive, new to rowing, competitive rowers and those that want to row at a high level e.g., Junior champs, National and GB levels. It encourages a love of and habit in rowing which helps members to keep fit and stay healthy.

The club also balances participation and performance in several squads, this is particularly true for Junior and Adaptive squads

A growing club with a waiting list of people that would like to join across a range of squads. The LTR and Various camps are creating demand which whilst good could be creating unrealistic expectations.

An amateur club and run by volunteers with a good range of skills.

Offers the opportunity to develop rowing skills and compete.

Is achieving a lot already -All in all it is currently punching above our weight considering its limitations and some of this is down to resourcefulness.

Is financially solvent and offers a good range of equipment.

Is winning in competitions and receiving medals, with success across all squads

There is a commitment amongst the MCM and RCM to improve the club further in the future and meet member needs.

There are however several known limitations or issues.

Has a good range of boats and equipment but more **investment** of both is needed to support all squads e.g., the boat plan and gym equipment for adaptive squad.

Financially underfunded versus known future spend. Membership fees cover the day to day running costs of the club. There is already need to build a fund of 50k to support ongoing maintenance of buildings and equipment.

Given the club growth and new mix of squads there is a need for clearer club direction which it is now trying to address. **The club is made up of fractions** (typically by squad) and not joined up.

Members are happy with the communication they receive but is there a need to do more to explain the club, what it is achieving and its aims.

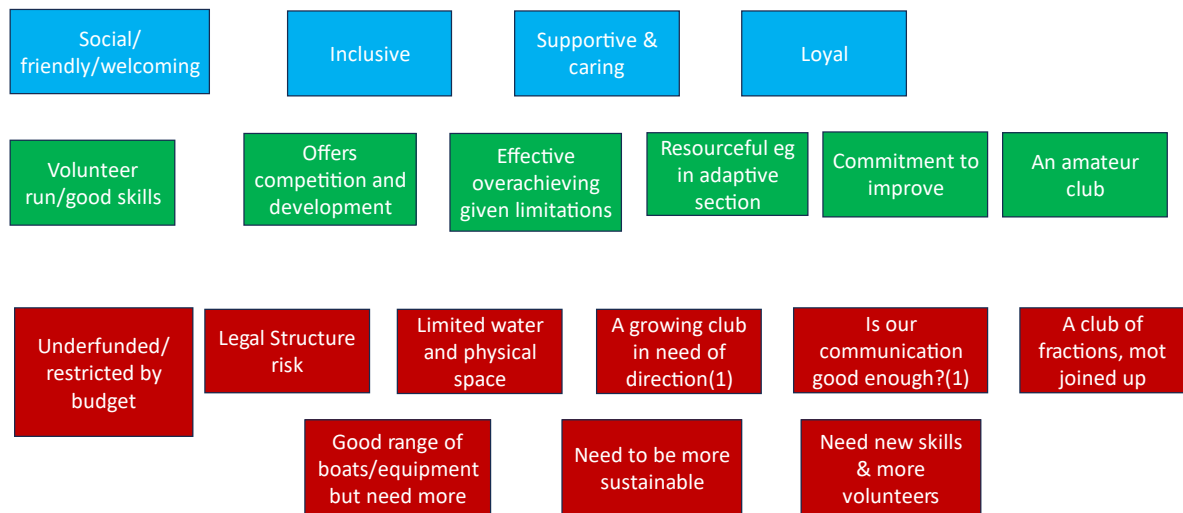
Is limited by the stretch of water and the amount of physical space available

The Club legal structure means that liability is unlimited which poses a threat to every member given the increased nature of risks for the club

Would like to be more sustainable in its approach.

Needs more volunteers and new skills to progress.

What Sort of club are we now



3.Long Term vision for the Club

Thoughts were based at this stage on what the club would **ideally** be like the future if **unconstrained by the clubs' current limitations or timescale**. This was to ensure all aspirations were captured upfront before prioritising at a later stage

Given the number of positive things already identified about the club, then the future assumed the qualities and achievements from Exercise 1 and 2 became the foundation from which to develop further.

Overall SUABC would offer 'A positive Rowing club experience for all'

With have one agreed direction that the membership has understood and bought into, more opportunities for social e.g. annual club social dinner and improved communication across squads.

Where constraints have been removed. In the future the club would have solved the budget issues, have acquired more space or more efficient space management with more provisions for adaptive squad e.g., lift and gym equipment and to support the larger club it would have a Head coach, develop a club rowing style, and have more coaches. There would be more volunteers.

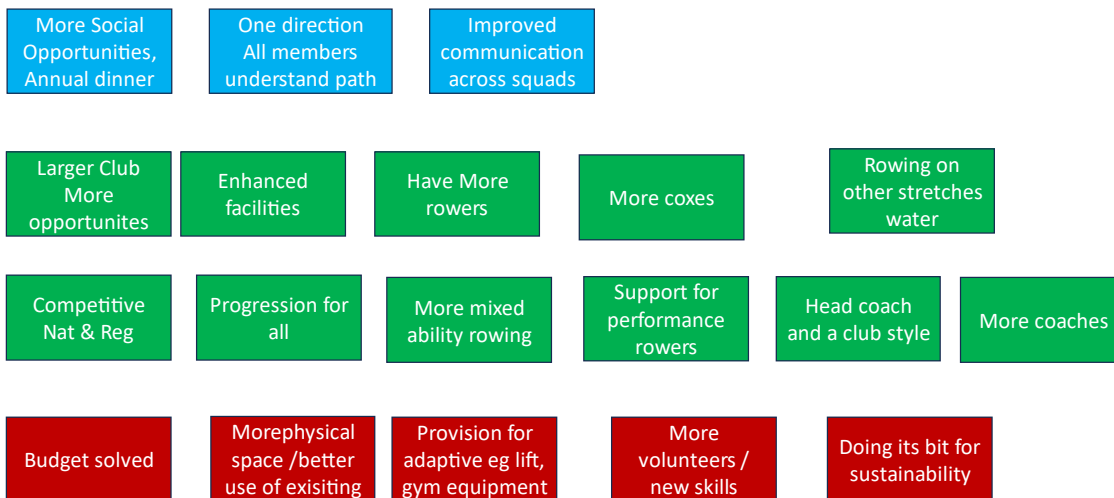
The club would be bigger with more members, rowers and coxes providing more income and more rowing opportunities within squads.

The club would be able to show progression for all based on their personal objectives and we would have enhanced facilities to support this. We would have more mixed ability rowing to support adaptive and personal development of individuals.

Rowing would also happen on other stretches of water, be competitive regionally and nationally and with support offered for performance rowers.

In fact, **17 distinct future aspirations** were identified as shown below

What Sort of club do we want to be



The measures of success

Identified measures of success for these long-term aims are

A vibrant club house, respect, **and harmony** between squads with clear goals by squad supported by all. Source- number of complaints between squads, VC, and member feedback.

Members will be achieving their rowing club aims and there would be **higher member numbers** and **higher levels of member satisfaction** Source Membership data and member surveys.

We would be winning at a high level with SUABC making up 50% of West Mids. regional Team, Regular qualifiers at HRR & HWR, NSR Medallists and Brit champs and 2 or more trialists.

We would be solvent and able to financially support our plans Source the financial accounts

Enough volunteers to progress with key roles filled plus greater number of volunteers

4.Prioritising the Long Term Aims

All the 17 long term aims are important and will ultimately form part of the long-term plan. However, achieving these aims will require resources and time so we will need to be clear of the priority order for our focus and effort.

Once we have plans and actions for top priority items, we can then slot in the other elements on an opportunistic basis using any spare capacity.

1.Top Priority – ‘Budget Solved’ (26)

This is the biggest challenge for the club to achieve. Solving the budget challenge is seen as a foundational building block to achieve the future club vision. All attendees had made this either their top or second priority. The rationale was clear i.e. that additional funding is needed to support the delivery of the long term aims.

2. 2nd priority- 'One Direction' (11)

Having One Direction was the second priority and another foundational building block. One Direction means having an understood and agreed club vision with a plan to get there. This provides a clear context for any short- and medium-term decisions being made and enables all members to pull in the same direction

3. 3rd priority – 'to be competitive nationally and Regionally' (10)

This was considered a high priority as it supports the aspirations of rowing members across all a squad and helps SUABC to attract new rowers.

4. Progression for all (6)

The club would be able to support all rowers to achieve progression whatever level and objective

5. Support for performance rowers (6)

Ensuring that we can provide the quality of boats and water time for performance rowers to achieve their goals. *Access to Offsite rowing is one short term method of supporting this group. Action Rowing committee*

6. Improved Squad Comms (5)

The need for good communication between squads is important. It was felt that the RCM meeting is beginning to address this and that in the short term we should continue to build on this as part of the ongoing discussions at RCM. *Action Rowing committee*

7. Rowing on other water (3)

This does happen already on an ad hoc basis by squad. It was felt that there could be more planning/ co-ordination of dates and times for any planned off-site rowing for camps or as opportunity to row on longer stretches of less busy water to practice race pieces. *ACTION -Taken into RCM in the short term.*

8. Larger club & more opportunities (1)

9. Have more rowers (1)

Other statements that remain in the vision

Enhanced facilities

More Coxes

More mixed ability rowing

More space/ better use of the space we have

Adaptive Provision e.g. lift – we are already progressing plans for a potential new pontoon and drawing for a lift are ongoing. *These will continue to be progressed in the short term based on funding. Action – continue as current*

Head coach with club style & More Coaches

More opportunities for Social –e.g. annual dinner

More Volunteers

More sustainable - Action -set up a working group to consider

5.Opportunities and actions to achieve the top priorities

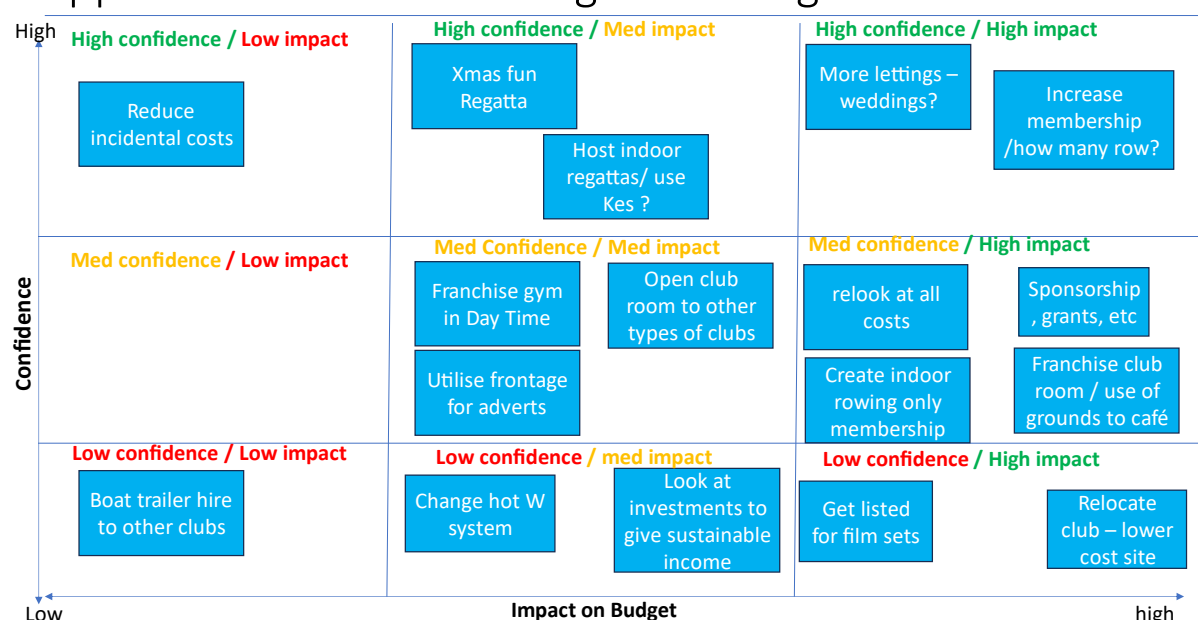
Priority 1 - Solving the Budget Challenge

The current budget status is that membership fees cover the day to day running costs of the club. We already need to build a fund of 50k to support ongoing maintenance work e.g. rowing equipment and buildings e.g. roof. Currently we forecast potentially having 20k of this from SUA regattas, Learn to Row and events.

A series of potential opportunities to help solve the budget constraints were identified and then categorised using confidence level in achieving them and the level of positive impact on the budget.

The outcome is shown below

Opportunities to solve Budget challenge



A series of actions were created to the ideas which are shown in the Appendix 2

Priority 2 – One Direction

Having One Direction was the second priority and another foundational building block. One Direction means having an understood and agreed club vision with a plan to get there. This provides a clear context for any short- and medium-term decisions being made and enables all members to pull in the same direction

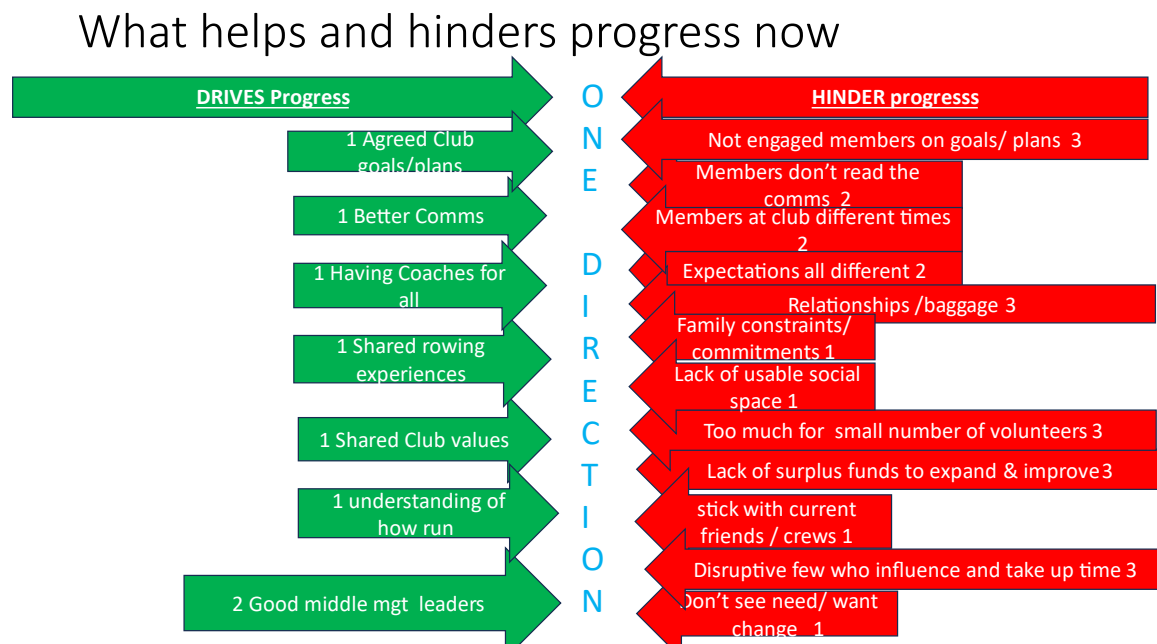
What would the club be like if 'one Direction' was achieved;

Overall, there would be a positive rowing club experience for all where people enjoy what they are doing, understand and support the aims different people, squads, and the club as a whole. There would be better communication to facilitate understanding, gain member input and attract more engagement. There would be more members willing to take on roles and jobs to facilitate the club and members to meet their ambitions. Detailed output is shown in appendix 4.1

Things help/ hinder us achieve One Direction

Drivers and inhibitors of 'One Vision 'were identified and graded on the strength of its influence were 1=low influence, 2= medium influence, 3 = high influence. **This demonstrated that there are currently more and stronger elements that are hindering our progress than drivers of positive change. The latter do exist but have little influence right now.**

The output is shown in the picture below.



There are however several opportunities to increase the positive drivers of progress and reduce the inhibitors as shown below

Opportunities to increase Drivers & reduce inhibitors



Based on this a series of actions were identified – see appendix 3 for details

6.High Level Draft Plan

Based on this work a very high-level plan has been developed. See Attachment ‘High Level Plan’

7.Next Steps

The summary of the Draft SUABC Strategy will be circulated to all club members for AGM

Members will be invited during and post the AGM to provide feedback and ideas based on this initial draft

Using the feedback the strategic plan will be finalised

Immediate actions will continue to be progressed

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Attendees

Attendees of one or more workshops in alphabetical order

Chris Belcher	Daytime VC
Jake Blatcher	Honorary Treasurer
Amanda Bowden	Master Women’s VC
Dawson Curnock	Chairman
Tom Doherty	Ordinary Member
Gina Fusco	Ordinary Member & Strategy Lead
Nev Hand	Acting Adaptive VC
Heather Hayton	Captain
Kate Slater	Honorary Treasurer
Helen Smith	Honorary Secretary
Steve Wellstead	Junior Co-ordinator

Appendix 2 – Resolve Budget Actions

‘Budget Solved’ - Actions to support the budget challenge

It makes sense to focus first on those opportunities in the 4 boxes that have high / high, high / med or med/med rating impacts and confidence. These are listed below with some suggested next steps.

High Confidence / High Impact

Increasing our membership is a way to increase our funds and we know we can attract more. Given current fees cover costs then fees from every new member goes straight to the bottom line. The first step is to investigate how many of our members row and use this to information to clarify how many more rowers we could realistically take on. *Action Rowing Committee*

Increase the number of lettings – one example is weddings as these often have a premium attached. One idea was to partner with wedding planners to provide readymade package options. Both the revenue potential from increased lettings and confidence in attracting interest were High. *Action - Ask for a volunteer to progress in liaison with Chris Best*

High Confidence / Medium impact

Xmas Regatta -The boxing day regatta already takes place and could become a Xmas fun regatta, attracting more participants and more revenue. We know how to run regattas and confidence is high. We could achieve a moderate revenue level. *Action - find volunteers to project manage.*

Host an indoor regatta during the winter for Juniors & seniors. We could potentially ask Kes to allow us to use their facilities and then we could offer this across other clubs. The team felt confident in creating the event and revenue would be moderate. *Action – find volunteers to project manage*

Medium confidence /High Impact

Re look at all ongoing costs including incidentals and cleaning to identify economies. This could have a potential high ongoing annual saving confidence is moderate. *Action- KS and DW to review current costs.*

Sponsorships, Grants & competitions -potential funds could be high and confidence in achieving is moderate. *Action GF -Follow up with Mimi Glen*

Franchise a Café at the club – potentially use the club room or a part of the grounds to franchise a café that is open to members and the public. *Action- for discussion at MCM prior to commencing investigation*

Establish an Indoor Rowing only Membership

This could be offered to new members coached by a SUABC coach would make more use of the Facilities without impacting rowing numbers and capacity. *Action- for discussion at MCM prior to commencing investigation*

Medium confidence / Medium impact

Franchise the Gym in the Daytime

Franchise the gym in the day time e.g. to host classes or for public use. This could create an additional revenue stream from the facilities at times not used by members. Would require further investigation and consideration of pros and cons e.g. member reaction, insurance impact.

Open the Club room up for other local groups/ club – could create additional revenue from the space at times not used by members. Similar next steps to Gym franchise.

Action- these ideas are similar and so draw them together under one Action – MCM to discuss next steps

Low Confidence / High Impact

One large driver of cost is the boat house itself due to age etc. Also, the size of the building and land is also a key constraint in terms of increased boat storage space and increased members etc. Therefore, whilst this is LOW confidence, it is recommended that Exec begin to investigate the feasibility of relocating the club to a different site. *ACTION – Exec to discuss the next steps*

Low Confidence / Medium Impact

Hot water system – remove the central hot water system. Could be a big job and hence confidence low.

Consider different ways to invest funds to create ongoing income- The idea would be to use new investment instruments to create regular return that could support ongoing maintenance costs.

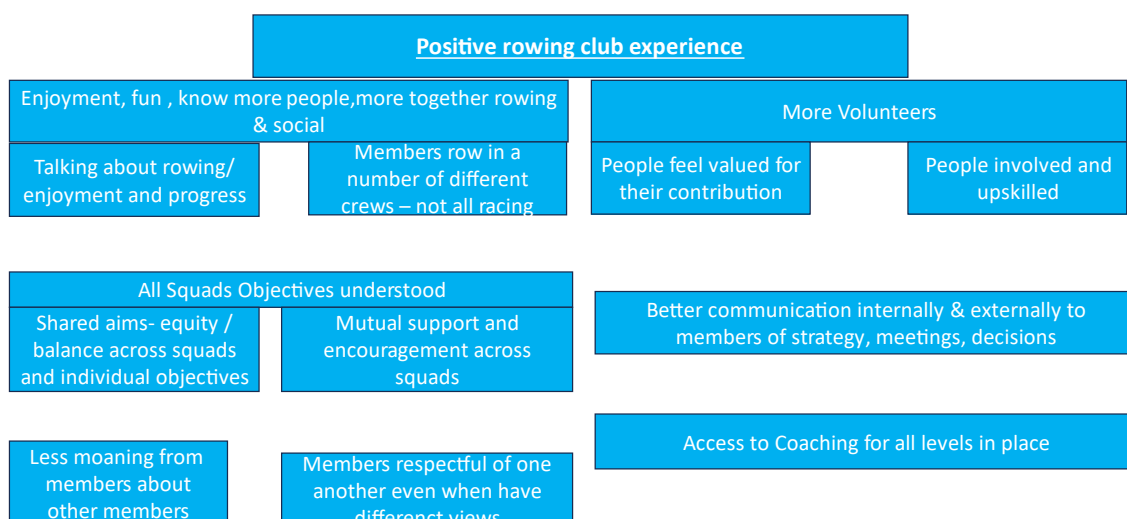
Action KS and JB to consider and bring any recommendations to Exec.

Low confidence / Low impact

Hire out boats and trailer – could do this during Henley week for example.

Appendix 3 – One direction Outcome and Actions

What the club would be like with One Direction



Actions to strengthen the positive drivers & reduce the inhibitors of One Direction

1. Membership understanding and agreement to the club long term aspirations. **Action**– the draft aspirations, priorities and high-level plan will be circulated to members as part of AGM. Opportunities will be found to gain feedback and input from members which will be used to formulate a final plan.
2. Communication- Internal communication needs to improve to enable members to be up to date on Club finances, decisions, and progress against plans as well as more general race updates and achievements. External communications need to improve to help create greater

awareness of the club and generate interest. **ACTION** – Create a Communications Lead Role and get volunteers to fill positions and support activity.

3. More Shared experiences – **Action** -VCs will encourage multi crew participation and find more opportunity to come together with other squad members through social and volunteering activities.
4. Volunteers – we need volunteers to help deliver the plans. **ACTION** – issue a list of Role and Jobs. Issue club wide appeal & ask VC to approach members with required skills to volunteer.
5. More coaching. Action RC and VCs to create coached opportunity for their squads and identify coach(s) who can be asked for support directly by members perhaps for a fee.