

BHRC Member Meeting

Sunday 11th December 7:30PM Zoom

Attendees: Carol Jenkins, Charles Inglis, Jason Podmore, Julie Park, Will Evans (Chair), Hayley Cassells (Minutes), Anthony Fettah, Georgina Nicholson, Geoff Robson, Alan Jones, Garry O'Grady, Chloe Wakefield, Debbie Wakefield, Helen Langford, Emma Langford, Samantha Eltiringham, Joy Swinbank, Alf Swinbank, Shaun Metcalfe

Apologies: Barry Delaney

Minutes of last meeting

No objection to minutes. No matters arising.

Update on Office

Hayley Cassells has been in post as secretary for the past week. At the minute she is working from home however has been looking at premises locally and hoping to move in before Christmas. Registered office has been changed to the accountants address, this will not be the correspondence address once we have premises.

Garry O'Grady asked if there had been any changes to the bank account. Explained all directors have been added as signatories to avoid any issues going forwards.

Update on TrotBritain

In talks at the minute regarding a joint agreement on integrity.

Update on Integrity

Carried out 163 tests this year compared to 165 last year. 97 were full blood and 66 blood gas. 8 positive cases, 5 have been dealt with and 3 are still live. One will come to panel early in the new year and the other is a bit behind.

We are currently negotiating with the labs for an agreement for next year. We hope to be working with both Newmarket and France once again.

Hopefully next year there will be a focus on out of race testing and we are working on a protocol for this at the moment.

The BHRC will be having a training seminar in the new year with the integrity team and Idexx will also be joining this to show further testing that can be done with the black book.

Also looking at medication books kept by trainers, these are kept by most at the moment but we want to look at the quality of these going forwards.

Debbie Wakefield asked who are the integrity officers and who will be doing tests. All directors will be trained in integrity as well as a number of stewards. The track vet actually takes the blood tests and it is just the paperwork that the integrity officer needs to do. Out of racing testing will likely be done by directors or integrity officers.

Garry O'Grady asked if all fines are paid up to date. Julie clarified that the fines had not all been paid in full but most were on payment plans or actively making payments .

Update on Database

Database is currently being built, they are testing it and finding different scenarios that are more difficult to ensure the system is working correctly.

Julie has asked Emma Langford to come up with a few scenarios that could be more difficult for the database just to test it.

Jason Podmore asked if we have come to a decision regarding integrity where a horse finished second or third to a positive test. Emma Langford agrees that the penalty should not go on after the fact. Most of the directors felt the same way last year but unfortunately it was rejected by the handicap panel. This should be put to the members to get their feelings on what they feel is the best scenario going forwards for this.

Garry O'Grady asked if anyone will still be keeping a track of horses marks other than the database. It was clarified that these will be monitored manually in addition to the database to help catch any errors.

Anthony asked if there was a further cost for the database. Hayley clarified that the second phase of the database has a current cost of £14K however this could reduce depending on the delivery being on time and that this is the final stage of the database being built rather than the original 5 phase plan that was in place.

Garry O'Grady asked if there was a need for a second person in the office with this new database in place. It was noted that we are going to monitor the situation with the office and see if a permanent second person is necessary going forwards.

Update on Stewarding

Not really much of an update to give as there has been no racing since the last meeting. We will be having seminars in the new year. We need to review the rule book before we set up the stewarding seminars. Currently in the process of compiling videos for the stewarding seminars to hopefully improve consistency of stewarding across the country.

Update on Insurance

The accident in Scotland has caused issues with being able to find insurance however we have managed to obtain a policy to cover racing next year, there has been a slight increase in the cost from last year.

Anthony asked what was happening with the extra money received from putting the licenses up, there should be an extra £61,500 funds. The BHRC are not in financial difficulty so are the license fees going to go down going forwards. It was promised that the license fees would be reduced after the directors liability insurance as promised by Darren Owen. The BHRC is not operating at a profit of £30+K per year. The license fees have not been looked at for 2023 however this is the only form of income that the BHRC has. The BHRC have invested money in both screens for the tracks in case a horse is injured, the drone at race meetings as well as the vet at the beginning of the year at qualifying meetings. Anthony suggested that this be put back to the promoters as they are the ones running the race meetings as they pay an affiliation fee to run racing. Affiliation fee is £20.

Debbie Wakefield asked if a meeting could be held with the directors to see if it was possible to give some money back to the members without putting the sport in jeopardy.

Garry O'Grady asked why the BHRC aren't looking for external sponsorship. It was explained that we just haven't had the workforce recently to be able to go and look for sponsorship. If we hired a second person in the office it could be counter productive as we would then have their salary to pay and may not get as much money in to cover this but if we could find a member to volunteer to do this it would be ideal.

License fees will be added to the agenda of the next directors meeting. To see if we can reduce these or keep it at the same level and put the money back into the sport.

Acceptance of Northern Ireland - Graham Smith

Geoff Robson explained that Northern Ireland is part of the UK. Anthony said that it is between 12-15K that we would receive licenses from the Irish. The recognised governing body is the IHRA and they are the only recognised governing body at the moment. The current proposal from NISA is for them to race on a visitors pass rather than become members of the BHRC.

Garry O'Grady asked if it would compromise our membership of the ITA. The BHRC's membership would be compromised if they allowed NISA race with us. Garry O'Grady explained that the ITA recognition means that drivers or trainers can go anywhere in the world and drive or train and if we lose this it would mean our licenses would not be recognised world wide. The ITA recognise Ireland as one island not North and South. Helen Langford asked if NISA are classed the same as Wales and Borders. In the view of the ITA they are classed as a breakaway. If NISA had recognition with the ITA then there would not be any implications with having them come as visitors.

Proposed that it is carried forwards to the next meeting.

Moving date of AGM - Anthony Fettah

Anthony Fettah said nothing has been submitted to companies house to ask for an extension and the BHRC has not gone back to the members to ask if they are happy to move it. Will Evans explained that this had been explained in the last meeting that the AGM had been moved and there were no objections. Garry O'Grady asked why the AGM had been moved. It was explained that this was moved for the sake of the accounts as they currently run April to March so they aren't giving a complete picture of a complete season and are instead split partially over two seasons. The reason it was moved was to allow for time to produce the accounts ahead of the meeting.

AOB

Garry O'Grady questioned the decision to move the sire stakes 2 year old race forwards to July. Helen Langford agrees with Garry that it isn't sensible to move the race date forwards, she feels it should be at the end of the season as two year olds should race as far at the end of the year as possible. Debbie Wakefield said she does not agree with 2 year old racing in general. Helen Langford thinks if the nomination fee was later in the year then more people would nominate them once they know if their horse is going well enough to. Dai said that Tregaron brought their race forwards and since then everyone else has started to move their races forwards as well. Helen Langford has asked that since the date has moved can she have a refund of the fly she has paid in.

Emma Langford feels that 2 year olds running in July is a welfare issue. Carol Jenkins noted that 2 year olds currently run in June, if we were going to take this stance then we would need to push all 2 year old races back.

Charles Inglis pointed out that there was already a two year old race at the July meeting this year at York and there were also two year olds going in schooling races getting pushed around with older horses.

Emma Langford asked why the trainers that had been asked their opinions had been chosen. It was explained that public trainers make up the majority of trainers entering for the race with 100% of the horses put forward in 2022 being done so by public trainers. A more than a third of public trainers were asked their opinions and the majority came back positively regarding the move.

Garry O'Grady asked which directors agree with 2 year old racing. Will Evans said he does not race two year olds, Jason Posmore doesn't agree with 2 year old racing getting them pushed around the track at high speed, Carol Jenkins would never race a two year old, Charles sees why people race two year olds because of the money, Julie Park doesn't agree with two year old racing in general. Garry feels that the sire stakes money should be removed from two year olds and put into 4 year old racing.

Date and time of next meeting

5th March 2023