

BHRC Members Meeting
Thursday 8th June 7:30PM via Zoom

Attendees: Carol Jenkins, Charles Inglis, Jason Podmore, Julie Park, Will Evans, Hayley Cassells (Minutes), Garry O'Grady, Anthony Fettah, Helen Langford, Chloe Wakefield, Debbie Wakefield, Shaun Metcalfe, Graham Smith, Ric Park, Gareth Bevan, Robert Millichap, Emma Langford

Apologies: Barry Delaney

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting:
Carol Jenkins Proposed Minutes, Graham Smith Seconded Minutes

Update on The Office

We had updated at the last members meeting to say an office has been found. Unfortunately there were a few issues so we have had to find another premises but this won't be ready for the next few months.

Update on Integrity

14 tests have been done in 2023. 9 Full bloods and 5 Blood Gas. 13 tests have been returned negative and we are still waiting on one result. Of those 14 tests 2 have been elective and self funded.

We have called one review of medication books from trainers so far which spanned across all training licence types and trainers from Scotland, England and Wales. The next batch of medication books will be requested soon to be checked by the integrity team.

Graham Smith said it is good to see that the results are being posted on the website for people to see.

Update on HRBGB

There has been no meeting since the last members meeting.

Update on Database & Website

The database is up and running, there have been a few small issues with the handicapping where it is rounding the points wrong or points dropping slightly lower than required. We have Dai John working alongside the database as a cross check. With the website we have had a few meetings with the developers who built the database to get costs for a new website to get the correct functionality without spending too much money. We have also reached out for other quotes to ensure we are getting the best price. Graham Smith asked if we had received quotes that we are happy with

and what the budget was. Hayley Cassells explained that in initial meetings we had been quoted figures which were too high, we need the basics of being able to see who is licenced, horses histories, results etc. The cash flow initially designated £5000 for the building of a website however if we can get it cheaper then all the better. Julie Park explained ideally we would like three comparable quotes for the website but we need to ensure that there is the functionality that we require.

Anthony Fettah asked how much had been spent on the database. Hayley Cassells explained we had not spent any more than the last figure provided of £32,145.10. Anthony Fettah said that we should not give the company any more money as we have spent this money and nothing shows on the website. Julie Park explained it was always a three stage process - firstly horses and licences, then handicap system and lastly the website.

Update on Stewarding

They have lost a few stewards this year due to natural factors such as age. The positive news is that we have had many new steward licence applications this year. To begin with they will observe at 4 meetings alongside experienced stewards before they receive their full licence which a few stewards have now done.

The drone is also in full force now, it has got a better angle to help with stewarding. We have had various examples of where it has helped in stewards enquiries. Also upon speaking to various A Class drivers they feel the sport is getting safer with the use of the drone is helping because horses are being given more space when people are pulling in.

Gareth said his frustration came from applying to be a track steward and was given a provisional stewarding licence. Jason says that he thinks people who have not held stewards licences before will need to be looked at going forwards as all directors should not necessarily become regional stewards automatically. Jason said he would be happy to grant Gareth Bevan a stewards licence.

Garry O'Grady did not think there should be any criteria to become a steward as we do not have enough people as stewards at the moment and they will learn on the job from more senior stewards. Julie asked if stewards were allowed to steward on a provisional stewards licence, as stewards had to go through the process of helping and observing in stewards meetings to better equip them to go forwards as a steward independently.

Proposal from W&W

Has been carried forwards to a future members meeting.

Big Ticket Items 1 Man 1 Vote

Graham would like clarity on what items class as big ticket items for one man one Vote.

The original list that was suggested in 2021 when one man election of board members, voting of award nominees, approval of important new rules, approval

We are having the constitution reviewed at the moment and we have discussed this list with the solicitor who felt that the list was reasonable for that list to cover.

When a final draft of the constitution is brought to the members, which has to be approved by 75% of the membership we believe would need to vote on it, it will include a list of one man one vote for clarity.

Robert Millichap believes it is 75% of the total membership that needs to vote on the constitution as a special resolution according to the companies act.

Robert worries that trying to define what members can and can't vote on is too difficult.

The constitution is difficult to navigate as there is no index to follow the solicitor has quoted between £1250 and £1500 for re-drafting the constitution.

Gareth feels that new rules should be put to members and if there are any objections to a rule change then it could be deemed as important then it should go to one person one vote.

Garry O'Grady thinks that the rule changes could be solved very easily as before one man one vote there was a committee and when one man one vote was brought in it was to replace the committee level.

Anthony Fettah said he thinks the directors are doing as they like they are not following the rules.

Robert Millichap says that the directors powers are to operate within your course of business, he feels it cannot legally restrict the items that members are allowed to vote on. He feels that rule changes should go to the members and if they take issue with any changes and then it can go to one man one vote.

Debbie Wakefield asked if we can look at one man one vote and use it more.

Robert Millichap and Gareth Bevan feel that big ticket items are what the members deem to be important.

Jason podmore asked if a horse receives a positive test would it need to be voted on whether they get a licence or not. Garry O'Grady clarified that if there is a penalty in the rule book then it has already been passed by the club.

NISA

Graham Smith has removed his NISA proposal from the agenda.

Are the BHRC following the correct procedure with rule changes?

Has been covered above.

Update on the current financial position

With income as far as we can see we are at a similar stage with licences as we were this time last year. We cannot be 100% accurate but working backwards from the figures we took in licences in June to September last year.

We are looking now at a projected income of 155/156K.

Expenditure wise insurance is static, we have saved £300 in rent per month that we have not been in the office. We have also managed to keep a lid on wages using the new database is starting to pay off and has reduced the need for outside help and continuing to use the BHRC directors who do work for free this has saved around another £3300 from what was predicted.

This means we are now running at a close to balanced budget.

Insurance for over 65's

Hayley Cassells explained that once drivers get to the age of 65 plus the levels of insurance and the items they are covered for decrease which is standard practice with all accident protection products on the market. Most policies you find on the market will stop offering cover at age 70/75 or the levels of cover will drop off drastically. Especially considering the drivers are paying £18 to cover them for a full season compared to if they were to try and get their own cover. The reason we have the level of cover that we do is to cover the minimum standard required for the insurers.

Garry O'Grady asked that all insurance must come under one umbrella but we are saying that if people are self employed or over 65 to try and find their own cover. Hayley explained that the covers are for different things - the members policy and event insurance would be active if a horse was to run into the crowd or various other scenarios where two companies would be trying to pass the blame to the other. If a driver was to fall and have an accident it would be a different type of cover.

Garry asked if it was possible to claim on both policies or would there be a grey area. Hayley explained that with protection you cannot be better off out of work than in work, so if you have a monthly benefit policy you can only claim a certain amount per month whereas as a fixed lump sum policy you can have multiple versions of these and they would all pay out if you were eligible to claim - you can also claim on both a monthly income policy and lump sum policy at the same time again just not going over the threshold based on your earnings.

Debbie Wakefield queried that the policy states that you are not covered for disablement, loss or death through racing. Hayley explained that there is an amendment further down on the policy that excludes this point.

Gareth queries that the personal accident cover is not in the umbrella policy, he is wondering where it is stated that the liability policies only need to be covered under the same insurer.

Promotion

Anthony Fettah withdrew this from the agenda

Finance

Moved on from

Constitution

Anthony asked if in the constitution it states that licence holders grant the licence to other licence holders.

Robert Millichap read “no person shall be admitted as a member of the association unless he is approved by the members at a general meeting”

“Membership of the association may be .. by the passing of a special resolution at a members meeting.”

Anthony asked if a licence holder was refused a licence how would the process work.

Robert Millichap explained that if a licence was refused then another member could bring it up at the next members meeting to be voted on by the membership.

Anthony asked if someone failed an integrity test can the board refuse a licence to their son. Robert Millichap said that the board is within their power to do this. If another member then chooses to bring this up at a members meeting then that is up to them.

Also if the board decides a licence application is too contentious then the board can choose to send it to one man one vote.

Garry O’Grady was happy to skip his agenda items in order to move forward in the agenda.

Plan for the future of the BHRC

Julie Park explained that licence fees will need to be taken on a year by year basis. If the cash flow gets healthier and looks much better than expected we could put it back to the members then we could ask the member what they would like to do with it such as at using the extra money to reduce licence fees or put it into prize money etc, at the moment this does not look likely but the cash flow is just a prediction there is no plan at the moment to increase licence fees either.

Gareth asked if there was a plan to reduce licence fees. Julie explained that we could have a plan for them to come down but we would need something else to replace that funding.

We have tried to get grant money from both Sport England and Sport Wales however they have both been rejected as we are not either a large enough sport or unique enough sport. Julie is currently working with FEI to get grant money for integrity which

would be ring fenced for integrity but would free up money that was designated for integrity to go elsewhere in the sport.

We have approached and spoken to individuals to see if they would be interested in helping to do ad hoc work trying to find sponsorship.

Gareth asked if we had been trying to get external sponsorship. Julie explained that Hayley has been set to contact companies regarding getting external sponsors however due to office commitments she has not had the time to contact sponsors.

Anthony asked if someone was able to get sponsorship by having a person on a commission basis, i.e. they would take 50% of any sponsorship they get, would the directors accept that. The directors agree that in principle it sounds like a great idea but it would likely go to one man one vote and it would need to be more detailed than this. We have been in touch with your horse magazine who have agreed to run an article on harness racing, they are going to link up with Alexis Laidler to write an article. We also have contacts at other magazines and are going to try and drip feed more publicity for the sport.

Graham Smith asked if we have saved money from regional stewards could we use this towards getting extra help in the office.

AOB

NISA

Graham has asked that NISA be recognised by the BHRC as a governing body so they can run with the BHRC. Gareth Bevan asked if NISA were an affiliated club. Graham said they are affiliated under companies house however they are not affiliated under the ITA. Graham says they used to have recognition under IHRC however they do not currently have recognition. Garry O'Grady asked if affiliation and recognition are different - Graham explained that with affiliation all the money would come to the BHRC through licences however they would just like recognition now that they are the governing body in Northern Ireland and can race with the BHRC under their own licences. Gareth asked if they were looking to be recognised as the governing body of Northern Ireland. Garry O'Grady asked if they are not affiliated would the BHRC then accept any unaffiliated body. Gareth Bevan explained that the way the ITA look at it, Ireland is Ireland and Britain is Scotland, England and Wales so if we look at it as the United Kingdom they are looking to take a portion of either Ireland and Great Britain's governance. Julie asked if we could face a legal challenge from the IHRA if we were to accept the NISA horses as the rule book says you need to have a GB address. NISA would need to look at getting ITA recognition on their own before we look to deal with them. The BHRC could risk their own ITA recognition by allowing unrecognised governing bodies to race with them.

Date and Time of Next Meeting
Thursday 13th September 7:30 PM

DRAFT